Tamil TIMES

VOL XXIII No.8 ISSN 0266-4488 AUGUST 2004 90p

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

UK/India/Sri Lanka	£15/US$25
Australia	AusS45
(Australian Bank cheques only)	
USA	US$35
Canada	Can$40
All other countries	£20/US$35

European Union, UK and Dutch delegation meeting LTTE delegation on 16 August (top); LTTE leader V. Pirapaharan inspecting passing out parades of his Rocket Propelled Grenade and Women's Brigade on 6 and 20 August (below)

TAPROBANE TRAVEL
SRI LANKA TOURS

TAPROBANE TRAVEL 1977 27 2004 ANNIVERSARY

The Undisputed No:1 Agent for flights to Sri Lanka

Top Agent for Sri Lankan Airlines for 12 consecutive years since 1991

Sri Lankan Airlines

SriLankan Airlines

From £450 + Taxes
Valid from 10 Sep - 9 Dec & 1 Jan - 29 Mar

From £665 + Taxes
Valid from 10 Dec - 24 Dec

Emirates

Emirates

From £450 + Taxes
Valid from 10 Sep - 9 Dec & 1 Jan - 29 Mar

From £785 + Taxes
Valid from 10 Dec - 24 Dec

Etihad Airways

ETIHAD ETIHAD

Sep - Nov 04
£350 + Taxes
Gatwick to Colombo with
Immediate connections From Nov 04
Tuesdays and Thursdays
Christmas Fares on Request

Kuwait Airways *1 Sep - 9 Dec 04*
From £360 + Taxes

KLM Martinair

KLM/MARTINAIR RETURNS TO COLOMBO
From £330 + Taxes
3 Nov - 10 Dec

From £500 + taxes
11 Dec- 24 Dec

For Reservations Contact our Travel Consultants :
Kamini, Chris, Leoni, Lucky or Adrian
Tel: 020 7437 6272, 020 7734 9078
19 Golden Square, London W1F 9HD
Emergency phone service for immediate travel only - 07860439483
www.srilankatours.co.uk/www.srilankans.co.uk

IATA

ATOL PROTECTED

"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it"

- Voltaire

Tamil TIMES

ISSN 0266 – 44 88
Vol. XXIII No.8
AUGUST 2004

Published by:
TAMIL TIMES LTD
PO Box 121, Sutton,
Surrey SM1 3TD
United Kingdom
Phone: 020 – 8644 0972
Fax: 020 – 8241 4557

Email: admin@tamiltimes.org
editor@tamiltimes.org
p.rajanayagam@btconnect.com
Website: http://www.tamiltimes.org

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

UK/India/Sri Lanka.....£15/US$25
Australia.....Aus$45
(Australian Bank cheques only)
USA.....US$35
Canada.....Can$40
All other countries.....£20.US$35

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or publishers. The publishers assume no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or artwork.

CONTENTS

Troubling Trends	03
EU on peace talks	04
Targeted killings and rights	05
BlackJuly 1983 - Apology	06
Anti-conversion bill	07
Slaughter in the safe house	10
Plot Mohan gunned down	11
Killing of .senior EPDP leader	12
LTTE on ISGA	13
Cross Currents	16
Peace process - stalemate	19
Batticaloa,uneasy calm	22
Hopes of peace	25
Leaving a Legacy	26
News Track	27
Classified	36

Troubling Trends

The prospects for an early resumption of the peace process in Sri Lanka seem bleak at present.

In the meantime, it appears that the Government has dropped its insistence on linking the negotiations on the LTTE's proposal for the setting up of an Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) to parallel discussions taking place on a final political solution to the conflict. It is now proposed that the Government would present its own set of proposals for an interim authority which could be the subject of discussions along with the LTTE's proposal for the ISGA at any resumed peace talks.

The LTTE has responded by rejecting the idea of the Government presenting counter-proposals describing it "as a pretext to block us from coming to the negotiating table". The LTTE seems to insist that the agenda for any resumed negotiations must be limited to discussing the 'institutionalisation' of its own ISGA proposal. In other words, the LTTE position appears to be that ISGA proposal as submitted by the LTTE is non-negotiable. This stance is unacceptable not only to the Government but also to other political parties. In fact, when the LTTE submitted its ISGA proposal in October last year, the Government of the day led by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe said in response that the LTTE proposal differed "in fundamental respects from the proposals submitted by the Government of Sri Lanka." and adding, "The Government's approach to these talks is one of principled negotiations directed towards the establishment of common ground in respect of significantly divergent views."

While the debate as to what should be discussed at any resumed negotiations, the stalemate continues as the situation in the country is manifesting troubling trends.

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Norway, Vidar Helgessen, in candid terms gave vent to his disappointment and elaborated on the risks inherent in the present situation after his last round of discussions with the Government in Colombo and the LTTE leadership in Kilinochchi during his visit to the island at the end of July.

Speaking to journalists, Mr Helgessen said that the prevailing widespread complacency in Sri Lanka about the peace process was very worrying. For more than a year there have been no direct negotiations, and the parties have been warned all the way that the ceasefire will be more fragile in the absence of such talks. The killings and bombings we have seen recently have created uncertainty and anxiety. This is the situation in the east as well as in the streets of Colombo. If the ground situation, which was bad enough now with killings taking place regularly in the eastern parts of the island, got worse, war could result.

The patience of the international community was being 'tested' and a frustrated international community could turn its attention elsewhere, as there were other problems in the world which were also crying for attention. What we hear is that there is nervousness and anxiety. This applies not only to Tamils in the east, but to Muslims and to Sinhalese as well. Instability leads to more suspicion between ethnic groups. The tensions in the East can only be resolved through a political process and not through violence. It is no exaggeration to say that there are elements playing with fire and that there are very real risks. People are mistaking the absence of war, for peace. There is still a conflict in Sri Lanka but it has been frozen by the parties' commitment to the ceasefire. And no one can deny that there has been some melting at the edges of this frozen conflict. This is why continued commitment is needed to maintain the ceasefire.

If the above comments reflected the Norwegian view of the situation in the country last month, since Mr Helgessen's departure it has become worse. The number of politically motivated killings has increased with two more being carried out in broad daylight on the streets of Colombo recently. The situation in the east of the east of the country presents a frightening catalogue of abductions and killings taking place almost on a daily basis producing an atmosphere gripping with a pervasive sense of tension and fear. The incidents of 'Tamil on Tamil violence' have reached an all time high as the LTTE is engaged in an exercise of cleansing the east of the remnants of 'Karuna loyalists' and its political opponents. There are increasing signs that the situation may develop into members of the security forces being inexorably drawn into direct confrontation with cadres of the LTTE risking a breakdown of the ceasefire.

The risks inherent in the present troubling situation are real, and if the country is not to drift into war again with the horrendous consequences that will inevitably ensue, it is the responsibility of the Government and the LTTE to return to the negotiating table without any undue delay.

EU on peace talks and human rights abuses

Aug 16 - The European Union in a press statement issued on Monday, 16 August, called upon the LTTE for the earliest resumption of peace talks and stated that the peace process and the development process are inter-linked. The EU also stated that political killings, abductions and child recruitment were not conducive to an atmosphere in which peace negotiations could be restarted, and urged the LTTE to restrain itself from any action that might provoke disruption of the cease-fire and allow unimpeded continuation of the activities of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission.

The statement of the EU came following a meeting between Mr S P Thamilselvan, political head of the LTTE and diplomats belonging to the British, Dutch and European Union Missions in Colombo on 16 August.

The following is the full text of the EU press release follows:

"On Monday 16th of August 2004, the local EU Troika, comprising the EU Presidency, the Ambassador of The Netherlands Her Excellency Mrs. Susan Th. Blankhart, and the High Commissioner of United Kingdom, His Excellency Mr. Stephen Evans, and the Charg d'Affaires of the European Commission, Mr. Wouter Wilton, met Mr. Thamilchelvam, Head of the Political Wing of the LTTE, in Kilinochchi, to discuss the progress in the peace process.

The meeting was constructive and dealt with the following matters, which were discussed in a frank and open manner.

The EU has throughout the conflict emphasised the importance of the respect for human rights. The killing of political opponents is a breach of fundamental human rights. There is no excuse for such violence, which can never resolve the internal differences in Sri Lanka. Child recruitment by the LTTE, which is also regarded as a breach of fundamental human rights, is an issue of continued concern of the EU. The EU wishes to reiterate the points that Commissioner Patten raised in his discussion with the LTTE in November 2003 on good governance, pluralism, human rights and democracy. These are the cornerstones of a settlement for an everlasting peace in Sri Lanka. They are important too for the LTTE to obtain recognition as a political player in Sri Lanka.

The EU is concerned and alarmed about the recent increase in political killings and the inability of the LTTE to solve internal differences in a peaceful manner. Since the cease-fire agreement was signed between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE a series of murders, attempted murders and abductions of civilians took place. In July the suicide attack and the killing of political opponents in Colombo and the brutal killings in Jaffna and in the East have shocked Sri Lanka and the international community.

Despite promising signs in April, that the LTTE was taking serious its pledge to release the children in its ranks, recruitment has been accelerated both in the North and East during the last couple of months. The EU supports the efforts of UNICEF to return these children to their homes.

These killings, abductions and child recruitment are not conducive to an atmosphere in which peace negotiations can be restarted. The EU urges the LTTE to restrain itself from any action that might provoke disruption of the cease-fire and allow unimpeded continuation of the activities of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission.

The EU urges the LTTE and the Sri Lankan Government to put the interests and wishes of the people of Sri Lanka for a permanent peace settlement first, by returning to the negotiating table and call upon the LTTE for the earliest resumption of peace talks, which have been suspended by the LTTE since April last year. We urge the LTTE to continue to work towards the restart of substantive talks. Only through dialogue can there be a negotiated settlement to the conflict. A return to the peace table, along with a strict adherence to the terms of the cease-fire agreement and full respect for human rights, are essential to sustain the peace process for the benefit of all ethnic communities in Sri Lanka.

The EU wishes to reiterate that the peace process and the development process are mutually reinforcing and inter-linked, as agreed in the Tokyo Conference last year."

'Assassinations and suicide bombings unacceptable'

Aug 20 - United States of America has urged the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers to "take steps to work to rebuild trust and schedule the promised talks as soon as possible". "Real progress towards peace and an end to violence in word and deed can begin the process of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's entering the political mainstream, and result in assistance for areas in the north and east most affected by conflict. Assassinations and suicide bombings are unacceptable. The recruitment of child soldiers must cease", a press release issued by the State Department of the United States after US Deputy Secretary of state Mr. Richard Armitage reviewed the situation in Sri Lanka with U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka Mr. Jeffrey Lunstead.

The US press release further stated, "President Kumaratunga has shown her desire to move forward on the peace process launched with the 2002 cease-fire. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam needs to respond positively and enter talks with the Sri Lankan Government. The cease-fire and a return to negotiations represent the best hope for Sri Lanka's future as a peaceful, prosperous, and unified nation.

"The United States stands ready to implement commitments to aid in Sri Lanka's reconstruction, but this will only be possible through a continuation of the peace process.

"Real progress towards peace and an end to violence in word and deed can begin the process of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's entering the political mainstream, and result in assistance for areas in the north and east most affected by conflict. Assassinations and suicide bombings are unacceptable. The recruitment of child soldiers must cease."

'Solution should be based on what Tamils want' - LTTE

Aug 14 – "We created the conditions for Peace Talks by unilaterally declaring a cease-fire in December 2001. Solution to the Tamil problem should be on the basis of aspirations of the Tamils because they are the ones who have faced discrimination, oppression and war for many years. It cannot be based on what the Sinhala people want. It cannot be based on what the Sinhala government wants. This is why the political pacts Tamils made in the past with Sinhala leaders came to naught. This is why it would be constructive to discuss the Interim Self-Governing Authority (ISGA) proposal endorsed by the Tamil people than to discuss a proposal put forward by the Sinhala government," LTTE's political head, Mr. S.P. Thamilchelvan, said in a press briefing on 14 August following a meeting with Mr. Akio Suda, Japanese Ambas-

sador in Sri Lanka at the LTTE Peace Secretariat in Kilinochchi.

Mr. Thamilchelvan said.

"The Tamil question has remained unresolved for more than 50 years because the governments in Colombo acted according to the Sinhala people's political interest. No proposal put forward by the Sinhala side has met any of the basic demands and the aspirations of the Tamils. In this context, we consider the counter-proposals by the Government of Sri Lanka as a pretext to block us from coming to the negotiating table," he said.

"The ISGA proposals have the Tamil people's full support and mandate. Therefore, talks based on the ISGA are the only possible way to address the Tamil question," Thamilchelvan said.

Referring to his meeting with the Japanese Ambassador, Mr Thamilselvan said, "We discussed with the Japanese envoy the urgent humanitarian needs of the people in the NorthEast. Now, the resumption of direct talks depends totally in the hands of GOSL." Mr. Thamilchelvan said.

Stressing the LTTE position that it is prepared to commence peace talks with the GoSL on the basis of the ISGA proposals, he said, "The ISGA proposals we have submitted were drafted with the widest participation of the Tamil people and the proposals have received an overwhelming mandate of the Tamil people in the NorthEast. The International community is very well aware about this reality."

Mr.Thamilchelvan dismissed media reports and allegations by Sri Lankan government that the LTTE has strengthened its forces around the Trincomalee harbour as fabrication. "Such allegations are aimed at confusing the International community. We are very firm in our commitment to the ceasefire agreement (CFA)," he noted.

Targeted Killings Threaten Ceasefire - Human Rights Watch

New York, July 28 - A spate of killings between factions of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) threatens Sri Lanka's ceasefire, Human Rights Watch warned today. More than a dozen people have been murdered over the last month in apparently politically motivated killings attributed either to the LTTE or a faction led by the LTTE's former eastern commander, Colonel Karuna, who broke away from the LTTE in March 2004.

"These targeted killings sadly show that the ceasefire has not meant an end to the violence that has plagued Sri Lanka," said James Ross, senior legal advisor for Human Rights Watch. "The LTTE and pro-Karuna forces should immediately halt these killings.

The violence between the LTTE and Karuna's group has spiraled in recent days. On July 25, police found the bodies of eight persons, most of whom were believed to be senior aides to Karuna, in a house outside the capital Colombo. They were apparently shot and killed while asleep. Police investigating the killings said that there was no evidence of crossfire or a gunfight, and that the killings appeared to have been committed by someone within the house.

Even before the police were notified of the killings, the LTTE announced that these victims had been killed by "dissidents" within Karuna's own faction, and stated further that the killers had sought and received refuge with the LTTE.

"Regardless of who perpetrated the killings, the LTTE's open protection of criminal suspects is an affront to the rule of law and the ceasefire agreement," said Ross. "Human Rights Watch calls on the LTTE to immediately turn them over to Sri Lankan authorities."

Human Rights Watch expressed serious concern at the recent spate of unlawful killings in and around Batticaloa, in eastern Sri Lanka. Kunjithamby Sivarasa, a local government official, was shot dead by LTTE cadres on July 9 at his home in the village of Ariyampathy. Velayutham Raveendran, a senior Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) member, a political party opposed to the LTTE, was shot by armed gunmen on a motorbike at a bus stop in Akkaraipattu town, south of Batticaloa, on July 21. More than 100 EPDP members have been killed since the February 2002 ceasefire agreement.

The LTTE has claimed responsibility for the public executions of Balasuntaram Sritharan and Thillaiampalam Suntararajan on July 8 at Illupadichchai junction. Their dead bodies were found by the side of a road, blindfolded, with manacles around their ankles. The LTTE publicly stated that the two men had been sentenced to death as pro-Karuna "traitors" and called on all Sri Lankan Tamils to identify any other such "traitors." Aiyathurai Nadesan, a Tamil journalist, was shot in Batticaloa on May 31. On May 24, Eastern University lecturer Kumaravel Thambaiah was shot and killed at his home in Batticaloa. The Karuna group is suspected in both killings. The apparent intention of such executions is to terrorize the local population and prevent the exercise of the basic rights of free association and expression.

Kanapathipillai Mahendran, known as "Satchi Master," and Sarvanamuttu Shanthakumar, were killed in Batticaloa prison by a fellow inmate and LTTE cadre on July 14. The LTTE claimed that "Satchi Master" had been campaigning for Colonel Karuna and his supporters from within the prison. The killings raise serious questions over the security and management of the prison, particularly when authorities know that members of rival groups are being held within the same building. Human Rights Watch called on the Sri Lankan authorities to explain how lethal weapons were allowed inside the prison, and to ensure that known rival factions are kept securely away from each other.

In the midst of this upsurge in violence, the LTTE recently organized the NorthEast Secretariat on Human Rights (NESHOR), a body intended to promote respect for human rights.

"Unfortunately, the renewed violence makes it essential that the LTTE's new human rights secretariat quickly demonstrates its effectiveness in protecting the rights of people in LTTE areas," said Ross.

'A frozen war starting to melt on the edges'

The Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister, Vidar Helgesen, met the Sri Lankan President, Chandrika Kumaratunga, on 27 July, as part of the ongoing efforts by Oslo to restart the stalled peace negotiations.

However, the deadlock over the agenda for the peace talks continued, with no agreement between Colombo and the LTTE on the basis on which to recommence the talks, which remain stalled since the unilateral pullout by the Tigers last April.

Mr. Helgesen, who met the LTTE's political wing leader, S.P. Tamilchelvan, in Kilinochchi on the previous day, briefed Ms. Kumaratunga "indicating that there was no agreement on the proposed agenda for recommencement of talks."

The Government in Colombo which previously insisted that talks on the issue of setting up an interim administration for the Northeast should be held in parallel with talks for a final political solution would appear to have abandoned that position.

According to the Presidential Secretariat, Ms. Kumaratunga, "indicated that her Government is willing to commence negotiations on an interim authority within the framework of a united Sri Lanka and to reach a durable solution to the conflict." The government hoped "that the LTTE will agree to resume talks on this basis," the release added.

However the Tamil Tigers have insisted that any resumed peace talks should be based only on their own proposal for setting up an 'Interim Self Governing Authority' (ISGA). The only common outcome of Mr. Helgesen's meetings with the LTTE and the Sri Lankan President were commitments made by the Government and the Tigers to adhere to the ceasefire agreement that has been in force since February 2002.

Without disguising his disappointment, Vidar Helgesen, said that the widespread complacency in Sri Lanka about the peace process was worrying him. People, in general, were "mistaking the absence of war, for peace", he told the media after four days of discussions with Sri Lankan and LTTE leaders.

People do not seem to realise that peace had to be attained through a peace process, he said. If the ground situation, which was bad enough now with killings taking place regularly in the eastern parts of the island, got worse, war could result, Helgesen warned.

The existence of a general complacency meant that the population was not persuading the main actors to take the hard decisions and exhibit the political will necessary to secure a lasting, durable peace, Helgesen said. "Norway cannot bring peace to Sri Lanka. It is the people of Sri Lanka who must bring peace to their country," he pointed out.

His impression was that both parties to the conflict were committed to securing peace through negotiations, but neither was doing enough to control the ground situation.

Referring to the large number of politically motivated killings, some attributed to the loyalists of the former LTTE eastern commander 'Karuna', and others attributed to the Tamil Tigers, Mr Helgessen said, unless the killings stopped and the ground situation improved, mutual trust would continue to evade the two sides. It was an absence of mutual trust that was holding up any substantive progress in the peace process, he said. He pleaded for the commencement of negotiations saying that it was only at the negotiating table that concrete and substantive progress could be made. Till then what is said will be of little practical value.

Helgesen said that the patience of the international community was being 'tested' and a frustrated international community could turn its attention elsewhere, as there were other problems in the world which were also crying for attention. He however, said that Norway was not at all contemplating giving up.

He ruled out any "robust military engagement" by the international community in Sri Lanka if the peace process, which he described as in "real danger," failed. Mr. Helgesen ruled out international military engagement here or taking up the issue at the United Nations security council as in the case of other countries currently engaging the attention of the international community.

"What we are seeing is a frozen war starting to melt on the edges," said Mr Helgesen adding that there was no hope of resurrecting the situation "in the near future." Mr. Helgesen said however that "he stood to be corrected" but such a change in the current situation "would be a pleasant surprise," given the level of mistrust between the government and the LTTE and the recent violence in the East and in Colombo following the split in the organization.

"The ground situation is unhelpful in restoring confidence between the two parties," said Mr. Helgesen adding that the trust which is deteriorating is "pretty low." Blaming the two parties - the government and the LTTE – he said the "peace process was not given enough priority," by them and "the two parties knew what was necessary and what needed to be done" on the security situation in the East.

"I am disturbed about the violence but equally disturbed about the incredible complacency," said Mr. Helgesen adding that most people were in favour of peace but not in favour of the peace process. "I don't think it is possible to de-link the peace process from the peace...If you want peace you have to go along with the peace process," said Mr Helgesen urging "the people of this country to "rally behind their leaders and put pressure" on them.

In an obvious reference to the JVP, a constituent party of the ruling Freedom Alliance, Mr Helgesen blamed it for its hard-line stance in failing to support President Chandrika Kumaratunga who he hailed for her "commitment" to the peace process.

"I have no doubts about the President's commitment, but she cannot operate in a vacuum," said Mr Helgesen who took the opportunity to lash out at opposition parties and constituent parties of the government who blocked her.

Mrs. Kumaratunga was flexible in agreeing to the LTTE condition of discussing the Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) but the JVP has continuously insisted that the core issue for a final settlement be taken up simultaneously. The chief opposition UNF had also not shown a keen desire to strengthen the hand of the President.

Mr Helgesen cautioning that the most important thing was to get back to the negotiating table, warned the leaders to be "ready to make difficult choices and political sacrifices if their aim was peace."

Mr Helgesen last addressed the media when the Norwegians called off their facilitation role temporarily in November until there was clarity as to who ran the government after President Kumaratunga took over the defence portfolio from the earlier UNF government. He admitted that clarity has now been re-established after Ms.Kumaratunga's party was elected after the April 2 general elections but said he would consult the international community on the next step to be taken given the stalemate and the security situation.

Black July 1983: A national apology

At a symbolic ceremony on Friday 23rd July at the Presidential Secretariat, where some of the victims of 'Black July' were awarded compensation, following the findings and recommendations of the Presidential Truth Commission, President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga made an unqualified national apology to the victims of July 1983 riots on behalf of the state, government and all citizens of Sri Lanka. She said that the apology was late but still not too late:

The following are some excerpts from her speech:

"As we know all nations have great achievements, which they are proud of, they also have moments in their history, which they need to be ashamed of. Only very few nations seem to have had the courage or the right leadership to accept the blame for their moments of shame.

At least now I believe that we as a nation and especially the Sri Lankan State should come of age, look the truth in the face and make a national apology, first to all the victims of that day in Black July and then beyond them to the entire nation.

Perhaps it is the responsibility of the State and the Government to engage in that exercise first and foremost, and then all of us as the Nation, every citizen in this country should collectively accept the blame and make that apology to all of you here who

are the representatives or the direct victims of that violence and through you to all the other tens of thousands who suffered by those incidents.

I would like to assign to myself the necessary task on behalf of the State of Sri Lanka, the Government and on behalf of all of us; all the citizens of Sri Lanka to extend that apology. It is late but I think it is still not too late.

Maybe if all of us can collectively put behind us all the little pettiness that has bound us in shackles, free ourselves from those many and numerous hatreds, jealousies that make of us little men and women, then I am sure we could move forward towards working, living as one nation in harmony, in a search for that very necessary unity within the diversity that is Sri Lanka, the diverse ethnic communities, the diverse religious communities, and various other social groups that live together in this country.

We cannot forget, we cannot blind ourselves to the mistakes we have made; we will have to accept collective guilt for the wrongs, and then move forward.

When I say collective guilt I mean first the State of Sri Lanka for the horrors they perpetrated upon one section of our peoples, 21 years ago and at other lesser moments, but I also mean all the others on the other side of the divide who have also used young children as suicide bombers, and killed hundreds of people and caused much suffering to other people.

I hope on this day, and I know that all of you here would hope and pray with me that all those who call themselves leaders, amongst the Sinhalese, the Tamils, the Muslims, the Hindus and everybody else would be able to reach at least for a brief moment that level of greatness that is required of us mere humans, those of us who pretend to be leaders to reach that greatness in order that we resolve this problem for our peoples.

We are willing to do that, I hope all the others are also ready to do that. I am sure the Government will receive the support from all the citizens of this country, irrespective of who they are, or to what community they belong, in this enterprise which is the most difficult, the most challenging and the most dangerous any Government of this country has undertaken."

Complaint to SLMM over suspicious incident at sea

Aug 19 - Sri Lankan authorities have complained to international cease-fire monitors, the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLM) that the Tamil Tiger rebels may be smuggling weapons into the country, taking unfair advantage of a truce, reports from Colombo said. "We have raised the matter with the Sri Lanka - Monitoring Mission," Defense Secretary Ciril Herath told journalists.

A military official said two Navy boats had observed the presence of a fishing trawler and two dinghy boats, three nautical miles from the Chalai, Mullaitivu coast in the north-east of the island.. Soon after that the Navy informed the Air Force and an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle was sent to monitor the area. However, these boats remained there until August 16, Monday evening and later the UAV returned to the base. The military officer said that around 4 p.m. a Tiger boat was seen being loaded with some boxes from the trawler and the boxes were later unloaded on the beach.

Three naval craft along with two ceasefire monitors rushed to the scene, but did not approach the trawler to avoid a possible confrontation. At the same time the Navy requested SLMM officers on land to inquire into the incident by going to the Chalai area.

The official said the Navy craft usually stayed away from the LTTE- held coastal area to avoid possible confrontation. He said that when two monitors attempted to enter the Chalai area, the LTTE had advised them not to proceed and they were sent back.

Meanwhile, military spokesman Col. Sumedha Perera last evening said that several boxes suspected to be containing 'military hardware' were being unloaded from the trawler to the dinghy.

He further said that when the SLMM monitors had tried to proceed to the Chalai area to inspect the trawler and examine the contents of the boxes, they were not allowed to do so by the LTTE cadres. According to the CFA, the monitors have the right to enter government or LTTE-held areas to carry out ceasefire related inquiries.

In the backdrop of this incident the National Security Council (NSC) has decided to call for explanation from the Ceasefire Monitors.

The NSC, which met on Tuesday, 19 August, presided over by President Chandrika Kumaratunga also took a critical view of the recent actions of the SLMM. A top Defence Ministry official was quoted as saying that Defence Secretary Cyril Herath will meet the chief of the SLMM shortly to inquire into the latest allegations against the mission. It is said that NSC is quite disturbed about SLMM's inaction and silence in respect of recent incidents of ceasefire violations. .

Defence Secretary Herath told the NSC that the Norwegian government should be notified immediately of the latest incident. The NSC also decided to notify the international community of the disturbing incidents.

The ministry official also said the NSC had at its meeting discussed the setting up of LTTE camps around the Trincomalee Harbour. Mr. Herath had also informed the NSC that though the SLMM was asked to submit a report on the LTTE camps in Trincomalee within two weeks, the monitors had failed to do so.

Sea Tigers engaged in naval manoeuvres off Sampur in Trincomalee have reportedly fired on a Navy gunboat on surveillance on 17 August, Tuesday evening. However the gunboat escaped from being hit and returned to base avoiding a confrontation, according to a complaint lodged by the Navy with the Norwegian Monitors.

The incident comes amid government complaints about a build up of Tamil Tiger installations near a major naval base in the country's eastern Trincomalee area and a mounting number of political killings in the east of the country.

Anti-Conversion Bill violates Constitution

Aug 17 - Speaker W. J. M. Lokubandara told Parliament that the Supreme Court had recommended that certain clauses of the 'Prohibition of Forcible Conversion of Religion Bill' violate certain articles of the Constitution and that the Bill in its present form has to be passed by not less than a two thirds majority and approved by the people at a referendum.

The Speaker was referring to the determination of the Supreme Court on the above mentioned Bill, presented to parliament by the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU), the political party comprising Buddhist monks, which had been challenged in the Supreme Court in terms of Article 121 (1) of the Constitution.

The Speaker announced that the Court had determined that in terms of the Article 123 of the Constitution that Section 2 of the Bill did not offend Article 9, 10, 12 (1) 12 (2) and 14 (1) (e) of the Constitution subject to the restrictions recommended to the definition of allurement in Clause 8 (9).

The Supreme Court had also determined that the provisions in Clauses 3 (a) 3 (b), 4 (a), 4 (b) 5 and 6 of the Bill are inconsistent with Articles 10, 12 (4), 76 (1), 10, 12 (1), 76 (1) of the Constitution respectively.

The Court had further recommended that Clauses 3 and 4 (b) of the Bill violated Article 10 of the Constitution. The Bill in its present form had to be passed by not less that two thirds of the whole number of Members (including those not present) and approved by the people at a referendum in terms of Article 83 (a) of the Constitution. The Court further specified that if Clauses 3 and 4 (b) are deleted the Bill would not be inconsistent with Article 10 of the Constitution.

In view of the findings of the Clause 4 (a) of the Bill in violation of Article 12 (1) of the constitution the Court had recommended that the words "Notwithstanding anything to the contrary to any provision in code of Criminal Procedure Act" in Clause 4 (a) of the Bill be deleted, and that item 11 of the schedule referred to in the proviso to Clause 4 (a) of the bill be deleted.

In the event of Clause 4 (a) being amended, any institution of proceedings - under the Clause 5, - of the Bill relating to the offences mentioned therein be instituted in accordance with the provisions of Section 136 of the Criminal Procedure Code Act and subject to the written sanction of the Attorney-General.

The Supreme Court has further recommended to interpolate the words "for the purpose of converting a person from one religion to another" after the word "temptation" in sub paragraph (a) of Clause 8, and the words "for the purpose of converting a person from one religion to another" at the end of sub paragraph (c) of Clause 8, and the word of "wilful" after the word of "includes" in sub paragraph (d) of Clause 8 and the interpolation the words "for the purpose of converting a person from one religion to another" at the end of the sub paragraph 8 (d).

I order that the determination of the Supreme Court be printed in the official report of today's proceedings.

Compu;sory ID for polls

The National Election Monitoring and Evaluation Centre (NEMEC) in a media release issued on 16 August commended and extended their fullest support towards the Government's decision to present a special Bill in Parliament to make the National Identity Card compulsory for polls.

A press release issued by NEMEC Vice President Dr. Swarnalatha Perera states that the Government is scheduled to present an emergency bill in Parliament next week to make necessary arrangements to make the ID compulsory for voters in an election. Dr. Perera in her media release further stated that this was a long felt need anticipated by the country's law abiding citizens. This has also been recommenced by the Parliamentary Select Committee for new electoral system.

The media had reported that when the United People's Freedom Alliance Government made a request at the Party Leader's meeting held on August 12 to debate this bill as an emergency bill in Parliament on August 18 and 19, the Leaders of the UNP and Jathika Hela Urumaya had walked out from that meeting. The view of these two parties is that they need time to study on this issue, the release said.

"The National Identity Card would have been made compulsory for a long time ago. Therefore we commend the decision taken by the Government to debate this bill in Parliament on August 18 and 19 even without the support of the Opposition."

The release said that this move would help minimise poll rigging and election malpractices. It is pertinent to note that not all voters have the National Identity Card.

Therefore, the Government should implement a systematic programme to immediately issue Identity cards to such voters without any hindrance," the release added.

No mandate to probe killings

The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission said on 14 August that it could not investigate killings allegedly carried out by the LTTE or any other party as it was not part of its mandate. "We are not entrusted with investigating. It is only monitoring that we are entrusted with according to our mandate as ceasefire monitors," SLMM spokesperson Oscar Solnas said.

"We share the sentiments of the government with regard to the escalating killings. We are worried but we cannot investigate," Mr. Solnas said following comments by the Government spokesperson and Minister Mangala Samaraweera that the Government had entrusted the SLMM with the task of looking into the recent killings.

The SLMM spokesperson reacting to accusations that it was not effective in bringing the LTTE to book, said that the SLMM was doing everything it could by trying to increase communication between the military and the LTTE. "We are inquiring. There is a distinction between inquiring and investigating. We are taking the matter seriously," he said but refused to comment when asked what steps the SLMM had taken to take the issue up with the LTTE.

"The best we could do is to initiate a dialogue between the LTTE and the government," he said adding that the meeting between the military and the LTTE last Wednesday (11 August) in Ampara was an example of such dialogue.

Karuna accuses Govt. of collusion with Tigers

August 10 - LTTE renegade commander Karuna in an interview with Asia Tribune has accused the Sri Lanka Navy of tacitly collaborating with the LTTE in providing safe passage for Wanni Cadres to Verugal to attack pro-Karuna cadres.

In an interview with the Asian Tribune web newspaper, he has also accused the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission of turning a blind eye to LTTE's movements violating the Ceasefire agreement. Earlier the LTTE had accused the security forces of harbouring and assisting the Karuna faction and this problem has even become a thorn in the effort to restart peace talks.

Asked how it was possible for the troops from Wanni to have come in large numbers, cross Verugal River, and advance towards Vakarai, early on April 9 2004, Karuna said: "that was an intriguing development which is still, not clear. "We have suspicion that this would not have happened without the assistance and connivance of the Government of Sri Lanka. Transporting the armed forces via sea from Jaffna would not have been possible, without the tacit cooperation of the Sri Lanka Navy.

Also the SLMM too must have been directed simply to ignore the troop movement. We suspect that a big amount of money would have changed hands, as far as the Sri Lankan Navy was concerned to allow the sea transport of the cadres from Wanni to Vakarai without commotion and disruption.

"When I came to know through our intelligence sources that Prabhakaran is making arrangements to send a big battalion of soldiers from Wanni via sea, to attack us, I immediately brought this matter to the notice of the Sri Lanka Government, the SLMM and to the Government of Norway. I pointed out that it was against the Ceasefire Agreement to move a large group of forces - fully armed and arms and ammunitions from the non-cleared area to a cleared area, for a military campaign against us by the military cadres belonging to Parabhakaran. But the Government of Norway purposely ignored my contentions and also ordered the Scandinavian Monitors to ignore my complaint. Therefore, with the connivance and cooperation of Norway and the Government of Sri Lanka, Prabhakaran was able to move a large posse of combatants and high powered arms and ammunitions to attack us. Prabhakaran sent initially, 600 cadres left in the Jeyanthan battalion, who were stationed in the Wanni to fight our forces in the Batti - Amparai region. "Those 600 cadres were all from the Batticaloa and Amparai districts and they were almost recruited and enlisted in the Jeyanthan battalion by me. By sending them to fight a fratricidal war Prabhakaran planned to get rid of the Batticaloa-Amparai elite fighters by engaging in mutual recrudescence, a revengeful military campaign and killing each other once and for all.

"During that period, it dawned on me that I had a major responsibility in safeguarding the Jeyanthan Brigade cadres who came from Wanni as well as the 6000 cadres who were already with me at that time. But by that time on the very day Prabhakaran's troops led by the commanders from outside the Batticaloa-Amparai region managed to get their cadres to kill more than 70 women fighters who were stationed at Vakarai.

"Earlier, parents and family members in the Batticaloa-Amparai districts came to us and voluntarily handed over their children to fight the State-orchestrated war.

"But these very parents when they came to know that Prabhakaran had dispatched fighters belonging to Batticaloa-Amparai districts to fight their own brothers and sisters, they protested that they did not hand over their children to fight a fratricidal war... I was determined that I should not be a party to another fratricidal war. Therefore we decided to withdraw and hand over the fighters who were with us to the parents and families and requested them to go back but we retained a few hundred of my cadres with me.

"When we withdrew our forces, I appealed to Jeyanthan Brigade cadres to give up the fight and go back to their homes. According to my appeal I learnt so far 400 of them have left the Brigade and gone back to their homes."

Jayalalitha opposes ferry service with Lanka

Aug 4 - Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa has opposed any move to introduce a ferry service between Tuticorin and Colombo, saying it would affect the internal security of the country. In a letter to the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, she said the Centre had along been adopting a short-sighted approach on the question of starting a ferry service between India and Sri Lanka. "It does not perceive the horrendous fallout of such an action," she said

The role played by a 'deadly' terrorist group like LTTE, the political developments in Sri Lanka, as well as the implications for the international security situation in India were the factors that had to be taken into account before opening passenger traffic between India and Sri Lanka through a sea route, she said.

The Chief Minister said that the LTTE had a dubious record of hijacking the peace process and resorting to terrorist attacks that had extended their 'heinous marks to Indian soil itself'. The activities of the Sea Tigers, the naval wing of the LTTE, who had indulged in abduction of Indian fishermen, should not be ignored and should be viewed as an 'affront' to Indian sovereignty. Jayalalithaa said she was at a loss to understand how the ministry of shipping had considered that there was no threat to national security at present and proposed to introduce the ferry service between Tuticorin and Colombo.

RSF on journalists' safety

July 29 - Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has urged Norway to press Sri Lankan authorities to fight impunity with which journalists are attacked in the island, particularly on its east coast. '"Since the killing of a correspondent in Batticaloa region at the end of May, without any condemnation from a single minister, two other journalists have been forced to flee the area and take refuge in the capital", RSF said.

RSF urged Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen - visiting Colombo to relaunch the peace process - to promote press freedom in his meetings with the government, the Tamil Tigers and opposition figures.

The organisation's 28 July appeal came two days after two armed men, suspected of being LTTE members, shot journalist Sadacharalingam Kamaladas wounding him seriously in both legs at his home in Ariyampathi, Batticaloa district in the east of the country. The 25-year old, of the Tamil-language weekly *Thinamurusu*, was being treated in hospital in Batticaloa.

"We are extremely concerned at the rapid deterioration in security for Sri Lankan journalists in the east of the country," RSF wrote to Mr Helgesen. "Since this latest attack there is hardly a journalist left to work in this region, such is the climate of threat from all sides," said the RSF. "The lack of any real investigation or trials in the murders of journalists over the last four years has allowed complete impunity, which must now be brought to an end."

The weekly Thinamurusu, close to the pro -government Tamil party the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) is regularly harassed by its rival the Tamil Tigers (LTTE), RSF said.

"The Sri Lankan government should act urgently, under the guidance of the Norwegian authorities, so that reporters threatened by both LTTE forces and the government security forces, can do their job of informing the public without risking their lives," it concluded.

The organisation's 28 July appeal came two days after two armed men, suspected of being LTTE members, shot journalist Sadacharalingam Kamaladas wounding him seriously in both legs at his home in Ariyampathi, Batticaloa district in the east of the country. The 25-year old, of the Tamil-language weekly *Thinamurusu*, was being treated in hospital in Batticaloa. ❑

Slaughter in the 'safe-house'

Eight key associates of the renegade LTTE commander Mr. Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (Karuna) were killed in a predawn attack on their 'safe house' in the outskirts of Colombo on Sunday, 26 July. Even before the police came to know about the attack, the TamilNet website published a detailed report about the incident identifying by names the persons who were killed in the incident.

It said that Karuna's deputy called 'Kuhanesan' was also killed in the attack, the responsibility for which has been attributed to the LTTE. The website claimed that a Sri Lanka military intelligence operative was also killed in the attack.

In the afternoon the police who entered the house found eight bodies of persons believed to be close associates of LTTE's former commander Karuna. All had died of gunshots fired at close range. They have been killed while sleeping on the upper floor of the house. "The bodies were found in two rooms, in the sitting room and near the kitchen of the upper floor of the house," according to witnesses. Police said there was no evidence to suggest the targeted group had offered any resistance.

While speculation is rife as to how and who carried out these murders - as to whether it was done by Karuna dissidents as claimed by the LTTE, or by LTTE hitmen operating in Colombo – a well informed Tamil analyst said, "This is a meticulously planned operation by the Tiger intelligence wing. Many of Karuna's key men have been eliminated in this attack and this will cripple Karuna's ability to operate effectively. In fact, his own survival is very much in the balance."

The two storied house at 1607/10 in Crystal Terrace, Malabe Road, Kottawa, Pannipittiya, at which the slaughter had taken place was rented by the persons believed to be key Karuna associates two weeks earlier, according to local residents. It must have been selected believing be a safe being located near a rubber plantation and no other houses are located on that side of the road. A car belonging to the dead men was parked within the cartilage of the house, journalists said.

In a media release on Sunday, July 25, the Tigers claimed that dissidents within the renegade Karuna group had killed seven associates of Karuna because of differences within the group, and thereafter escaped and surrendered to the Tigers in the Amparai district on Sunday morning. The press release also identified the murdered Karuna associates as Kuhanesan, Castro, Kesavan, Ruban, Atparan, Vikky and Vimalkanth,

adding that Kuhanesan acted as the second in command to Karuna in the renegade group, The LTTE also alleged that the eighth man killed in the same incident was a military intelligence officer.

However, Sri Lanka Defence Ministry denied the eigth man among the dead was an Army intelligence officer. "The Directorate of Military Intelligence of the Army Headquarters categorically denies Army's involvement in the above incident and Sri Lanka Army further assures that no military intelligence operative is among the dead," the Defence Ministry stated in a press release.

The Colombo police didn't know of the massacre until the LTTE gave the first indication, perhaps purposely. A conversation between two LTTE cadres, monitored by the army in the east revealed that the assassins had got in touch with their regional leader Thambirajah Ramesh and had informed him of the success of the operation..

The two cadres believed to be members of the Tiger intelligence wing had revealed the names of the dead. - But they hadn't revealed the location. Colombo police took almost four hours to locate the house, the sources said.

Police said among the dead were three cadres arrested by Hingurakgoda police on July 5 while they were breaking journey at the Bubule temple. They were among 14 cadres arrested along with three T-56 assault rifles with six magazines, one T-84 with three magazines, a T-81 rifle with one magazine, a 9mm pistol with one magazine, 633 rounds of 7.62 ammunition, 5 rounds of general purpose machine gun live ammunition, 52 cartridges for T 84s, five hand grenades and several other items. They were produced before Polonnaruwa District Magistrate Mrs. Sivapakyasundaram and were released each on Rs. 25,000 personal bail.

The Sri Lankan Government condemned murders as an act of terrorism. A press release issued by the Information Department said; "This undisguised act of terror was first disclosed on the Tamil Net website, before the police were notified of the murders. While the police investigations will reveal the identity of the murder victims and the perpetrators, it is clear that this sort of terrorist violence does not conform to the spirit and the letter of the ceasefire agreement and does not augur well for the smooth commencement of direct negotiations between the Government and the LTTE. The Government repeats its firm determination to maintain law and order and to take necessary action in accordance with the international norms against the scourge of terrorism that continued to affect Sri Lanka and other countries."

Post-mortem

The Magisterial post-mortem inquiry into the deaths of the remaining victims in the recent killing of eight persons at Athurugiriya was held on 28 July at the Homagama Magistrates court chambers by District Judge A.R. Fernando.

The bodies lying at the Colombo Mortuary were identified by the victim's next of kin. Balasingham Wigneswaram's body was identified by his wife and that of Ganeshan Kamalakanthan was identified by his mother while Murugesu Selvarasa's body was identified by his brother.

The relatives requested for the burial of some of the victims to be conducted at state expense due to reasons of poverty and the danger of transporting the bodies to their villages due to fear of LTTE threats.

Giving evidence at the inquest, Rasalingam Yogeswari said her husband, a father of four children, was a LTTE member for 10 years. She said his whereabouts were unknown to her and came to hear of his death only through the media.

A Ganeshan Kamalanathan's mother giving evidence said the deceased was an acquaintance of Karuna and when the conflict between the two LTTE factions began, his son told him that he was going to Colombo and she later came to know about his death.

Giving evidence, Gohoruwattege Samarajeewa, the landlord of the house where the incident occurred, said he had got the house on a lease from a lady called Indika and an acquaintance called Dhammika. Upon a request by Dhammika who said that four of his friends who were to go abroad needed lodging, the witness had given the upstair rooms to four Tamil nationals. At the time of the incident the witness said that he and his family were away and later came to know about the incident through the media.

The Judge directed the body of Sivaparakasan Amarasiva to be handed over to his father Vannimani Sivaprakasan, the body of Kandaiya Ananda Kumaran to be handed over to the brother Kandiah Chandramohan. However the body of Ponnathurai Thurainailian, who was identified by his brother Ponnathurai Pakyanathan was to be handed over at his request to his mother Poonathurai Sedi.

The Judge gave authority to dispose the body of Neil Dhammika whose body was identified by the victim's landlord Gohoruwattege Samarajeewa, who gave eidence before.

Funerals

Defying an LTTE order prohibiting public participation at the funeral cer-

(continued on next page)

PLOT Mohan gunned down in Colombo

41-year-old Kandiah Yogarajan alias PLOTE Mohan was gunned down by an assassin in broad daylight on Sunday, 31 July, at about 10 am near the House of Fashion on Duplication Road at Bambalapitiya in Colombo. He was shot at point blank range as he got off a three-wheeler opposite a telephone shop.

Police investigating the killing said two gunmen were involved in the attack. An eyewitness had told investigators that PLOTE Mohan was shot at point blank range soon after he got off a three-wheeler after receiving a call on his cellular phone. According to the driver of the three-wheeler the assassins had got off a white coloured van and fired at him.

"Initially we thought it was an underworld hit," a police officer said. But EPDP cadres based at their nearby Layards Road office who rushed to the scene had identified the victim.

According to an eyewitness, eight shots were fired at the victim repeatedly through the tri-shaw at PLOT Mohan. Mohan was not armed when he was gunned down, according to the police who were at the scene of the crime.

Despite denials from the military, there appears to be sufficient evidence to indicate that Mohan had been working with the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) over a long period after quitting PLOTE, a Tamil militant group led by the late Uma Maheswaran.

Security sources attributed the killing of Mohan to the Tamil Tigers. They said that the LTTE would have suspected that PLOTE Mohan was deeply involved in a plot to take advantage of the Karuna factor to weaken the LTTE in the east.

Born in the Central Camp area in the Ampara district, Kandiah Yogarajan aias PLOT Mohan had joined the PLOTE in 1983. He joined the PLOTE in October 1985 and was sent immediately for military training to Tamil Nadu. On his return he was entrusted to be in charge of the PLOTE's Periyathampani camp.

He subsequently left the PLOTE in 1991and escaped to Batticaloa, where he was associated with the TELO group for a short period. He also helped the Indian army by providing information about the LTTE. After the IPKF left, he worked closely with the Sri Lankan Army. Subsequently he moved from Batticaloa to Colombo and continued to help the army until he was gunned down on 26 July.

The tri-shaw driver while being questioned by police had admitted that he knew the deceased and his wife for five years. The couple had lived with their child in a rented house at Nugegoda during this period. They usually hired his tri-shaw whenever they wanted to visit some place and summoned his vehicle by phone. However, the tri-shaw driver had not known him by the name of PLOTE Mohan.

Lured to death

According to a report in *The Sunday Times* (8.8.2004) it would seem that Mohan had been lured to his death on 26 July in terms of a long laid plot. Six months back, a person named 'Siva', a native of Kothiyapallai in Batticaloa, had been tasked by the LTTE to obtain the most recent photograph of 46- year -old Kandiha Yogarasa alias PLOT Mohan.

Siva approached close relatives including Mohan's sister for the photograph assuming they would be attracted by a substantial monetary offer. He told them he had heard so much about Mohan he wanted to see a photograph of him. In those past six months Siva became a frequent visitor of Mohan's family in Kothiyapallai. But they said they didn't have a recent photograph of him.

But a determined Siva did not give up and he next tapped Mohan's brother. He approached him on the pretext of getting Mohan to use his influence to gain a licence to sell beer in his village. The modus operandi worked and soon Siva was in direct telephone contact with Mohan. As the friendship grew, the unsuspecting Mohan invited Siva to meet him in Colombo. According to Mohan's family, the two had met on previous occasions, significantly most of them opposite the popular House of Fashion, where Mohan was gunned down.

Mohan, his wife Akila and 13 year old daughter were living in a high security area in Nugegoda, where influential people including some leading politicians resided. Akila is convinced that it was Siva who had led her husband to the LTTE. "Siva was a regular caller and asked our help. We never suspected him because he was close to the family," she said.

After the broad daylight gunning down on 31 July, Colombo Crime Division led by Senior Superintendent of Police, D.S.Lugoda, has unearthed more information about Siva. According SSP Lugoda, Siva had left Batticaloa for the final mission on July 29 and stayed at 'Hotel Imperial' along Duplication road. He had stayed in that hotel on two previous occassions.

On 31 July, Siva had phoned Mohan and told him to meet him at the regular meeting point - opposite the House of Fashion. "Last Saturday he got down the regular threewheeler he uses and told me he was going to meet Siva. He told me not to cook as he would be bringing lunch," Akila said.

"Around 12 noon my former landlady came in the same three-wheeler that my husband had left in and told me that my husband had fallen ill and was in hospital. I did not believe her as my husband was hale and hearty." However it was not to hospital that Akila was taken to but to the scene of the shooting where she identified her husband's body. Akila claimed that her husband had been working closely with army intelligence units for the past 15 years and was drawing a regular allowance of Rs. 10,000 from the army.

SSP Lugoda said according to investigations, Mohan had finalised matters regarding getting the beer license for Siva. Mohan had picked up Siva on that fateful day, from Hotel Imperial and then gone to Bambalapiitya where they met a Tamil businessman who had apparently agreed to transfer the licence to Siva.

On their return Siva had got himself dropped before they got to Hotel Imperial. After dropping Siva, Mohan was heading home when he received a telephone call close to House of Fashions prompting him to tell the driver to stop the three-wheeler. Within minutes of getting off from the three-wheeler, Mohan was gunned down by the assassins who were waiting in ambush in a van.

Police have traced the vehicle number and searched the room in which Siva was staying where they found two mobile phones and a diary. Soon after, Batticaloa police was alerted to search Siva's home in Batticaloa but they found it abandoned. ❑

(continued from page 10)

emony, several hundred people paid their last respects to Pakyam Amarasevan alias Tehvan of main street, Kommathurai, Chenkalady, Ponnathurai Thurainandan alias Ruban of the same address and Kandiah Anandakumar of Kattankudy. The LTTE had earlier distributed leaflets warning the public of dire consequences if they attended what they called the traitors' funeral. The military estimated that about 1200 persons attended the three funerals held in the government-held area. A senior army official based in the area said several government servants attended the funerals. "The LTTE wouldn't have expected the public to defy their threat," he said.

A relative of one of the victims is quoted as saying that the LTTE had pressured the slain cadres' families not to bring their bodies to Batticaloa. Three families living in the army-held area had resisted the pressure. But those living in the Tiger-held territory had accepted the LTTE directive and the bodies of four cadres including that of Casto, said to be Karuna's personal bodyguard and Kuhenesan believed to be the rebel commander's second-in-command had not been accepted by their families. ❑

Senior EPDP leader shot dead in Colombo

A father of three daughters, five, eleven and thirteen years of age, Mr. Kandasamy Balanadarajah Iyer (also known as EROS Bala, or Sinna Bala), a senior leader and Media and Propaganda Secretary of the EPDP, was shot dead in Colombo by unidentified gunmen around 8.15 am on Monday 16 August. Mr. Balanadarajah also a well known writer and journalist, has been one of the main contributors to the Tamil weekly, 'Thinamurasu'.

On the day of his assassination, two gunmen waiting in ambush near his home on W A De Silva Mawatha in Wellawatte, Colombo 6. and shot him dead hitting him several times at close range minutes after he returned home after accompanying his children to their schools in the morning.

Balanadarajah was born in Uralu, Jaffna on June 6, 1957 and at the time of his assassination he with his family lived at No. 164/4A, W. A. De Silva Mawatha, in Wellawatte, Colombo 6.

Balanadarajah was popular among Tamils as a novelist and author. In addition to being the spokesman of the EPDP, Balanadarajah was on the Editorial Board of the Tamil weekly *"Thinamurasu"*. starting his political career in 1972, Balanadarajah was one of the pioneers in the Tamil militant movement of the 1970s and 1980s and was a co-founder of the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS). A veteran Tamil journalist and prolific writer, he had been contributing to practically every Tamil daily and weekly under his pen name "Eelawan". He had authored several books including Kani Wurdhi (Land Deeds), Weedu (The House) and Porattam (The Battle Field).

The EPDP said that they were positive that the killing was carried out by the LTTE. "We have no other suspects. We are one hundred percent sure it is the LTTE," a party spokesman said.

"The LTTE has assassinated 113 people in the North and East and in Colombo since the signing of the MoU in 2002. This was the 114th killing," the EPDP spokesman said.

Meanwhile, the EPDP in a press release blamed the LTTE for the killing of its media secretary Balanadarajah Iyer. Calling upon the authorities rein in the Tamil Tigers before they could sound the death-knell of democracy in this country, the EPDP's press release said that these killings had posed a serious security threat to the EPDP and its activists.

The EPDP pointed out that when the UNF government signed a Ceasefire Agreement with the LTTE, the government also agreed to disarm all other groups and took back all weapons, even those which were held for personal protection. Since then 114 EPDP members have been killed. In view of the peace process the government is unable to provide protection to democratic Tamil parties and hence the EPDP would initiate action through the international community to get the necessary protection. It is the responsibility of the international community to speak on their behalf if they are interested in bringing peace to Sri Lanka.

Condemnation

Condemning the murder of Balanadarajah, a Government a press release issued on 15 August said, "The Government of Sri Lanka strongly condemns the killing of Mr. Kandasamy Iyer Balanadarajah, Media Secretary of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), and co-founder of the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS), the latest in a spate of brutal killings that continue to be perpetrated in Colombo and the Eastern Province.

Those killed include journalists, academics and activists, who are targeted as a consequence of their political affiliation. In addition, an abortive assassination attempt on Minister Douglas Devananda was also carried out by a suicide bomber on 7 July 2004 in Colombo.

The EPDP of which Mr. Balanadarajah was a member has been particularly targeted during the last month. Among members of the EPDP killed recently are 10 August - Athmalingam Ramani, Deputy Organizer, EPDP Trincomalee; 10 August - Seenithambi Yogarajah, EPDP Supporter in Kalavanchikkudi; 21 July - Vallautham Raveendran, Chairman Alaiyadyvenbu Pradeshiya Sabha and Deputy Organizer, EPDP Ampara District;

The Nature of the killings and the persons targeted, suggests involvement of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in these incidents. The GOSL is concerned that these incidents are being perpetrated with disregard to the provisions of the Ceasefire Agreement, and contrary to the spirit of building an environment for peace.

The Government will assert its authority firmly and fairly in order to uphold law and order, maintain the Ceasefire Agreement and observe the civilized standards our people deserve and expect."

The US State Department in a statement issued "after Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage reviewed the situation in Sri Lanka with US Ambassador in Colombo Jeffrey Lunstead, including the recurring acts of violence such as assassinations and suicide bombings", stated that "Real progress towards peace and an end to violence in word and deed can begin," adding that "Real progress towards peace and an end to violence in word and deed can begin the process of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's entering the Political mainstream, and result in assistance for areas in the north and east most affected by conflict. Assassinations and suicide bombings are unacceptable. The recruitment of child soldiers must cease."

UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura condemned the murder of Iyer Balanadarajah. Its website said, "I condemn the killing of Iyer Balanadarajah which, like all killings of journalists, constitutes a cowardly attack on democracy and rule of law," Mr. Matsuura said. "I am confident that the authorities will spare no effort in investigating this killing, the second murder of this type this year. In view of the tragic violence that has marked so much of Sri Lanka's recent history, it is essential that freedom of the press be allowed to take root, if peace and democracy are to be sustained," he said.

"According to the non-governmental organization, Reporters Without Borders, Mr. Balanadarajah's newspaper has been subject to harassment from the insurgent Tamil Tigers (LTTE) movement. The NGO reports that another journalist working for the paper, Sadacharalingham

Kamalathasan, was shot and wounded in the Batticaloa district, east of the capital Colombo. It also says that the Tamil Tigers earlier this year tried to stop distribution of the paper in the eastern part of the country. Aiyathurai Nadesan, a Tamil journalist with the daily Virakesari Tamil, was shot dead on 31 May."

CBK condoles with Iyer family

President Chandrika Kumaratunga in a condolence message conveying her sympathies to Kandasamy Iyer Balanadarajah's wife Ms. Jegatheeswari Iyer, said, "I was deeply shocked and distressed to learn of the tragic demise of your husband Mr. Kandasamy Iyer Balanadarajah. He was a true democrat who espoused the rights of the Tamil speaking people in this country. He was admired by all right thinking citizens of this country because he always eschewed violence or the use of arms to achieve the cause of the Tamil people. He was a prolific writer who contributed much to enrich Tamil literature. I am truly dismayed that your beloved husband had to be the victim of this ruthless terrorist campaign to eliminate political opponents. My heartfelt sympathies are with you and your three little daughters, Madhura, Abbira, and Viveka. Please also convey my deepest condolences to the members of your family."

(continued on next page)

'Institutionalisation' of ISGA is a must, says LTTE

The peace talks between the Government and the LTTE remain stalled since April 2003 when the Tamil Tigers pulled out, and all efforts since then by the Norwegian facilitators to resurrect the talks have so far proved abortive. Now the LTTE has spelt out its position that any resumption of talks must be based only on the 'institutionalisation' of its proposal for the establishment of an Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) thereby adopting the stance that its proposal is 'non-negotiable'. The LTTE also seems to object to the idea of any discussion taking place on any other document containing counter-proposals drawn up by the Government in response to the LTTE's proposal.

A recent interview given by Mr S P Thamilselvan, political head of the LTTE, to Chris Kamalendran is reproduced here with curtsy of *The Sunday Times*, 15 August 2004:

The LTTE at different times is putt-ing forward different conditions to resume peace talks. What is the current position?

We do not impose conditions as such. These are only the reflections of the people. As sole representatives of the Tamil people it is our duty to win the rights of our people. If we do not put forward their demands we can't justify ourselves. But these are not conditions by the LTTE. The current position is that our ISGA proposal is before the government.

The LTTE has declared that the institutionalisation of the ISGA is a necessity to proceed with the peace process. Is this a demand to resume talks?

Sri Lanka's constitution does not contain powers to solve our problems. We need to have a mechanism. That is why we need to first establish or institutionalise the ISGA. While the ISGA is in operation we can talk about a final solution. This could be done while the ISGA serves the people. The ISGA is a must to serve the people who have been badly affected by 20 years of war. For the last 50 years so many negotiations have been held and agreements signed, but little has practically reached the people. Therefore we believe the ISGA is the practical way for benefits to reach the public. By the time we come to a situation of reaching a final settlement most of the problems would have been solved through the ISGA.

Does this mean the ISGA is a must to resume talks?

That is a must. We will not change our position on that. The reason for that is there were so many sub committees formed after the cease-fire agreement was signed but they are defunct now. The people are not getting benefits. So this proves that these sub committees and agreements are of little purpose. Thus we need the ISGA.

When the LTTE released its proposals on the ISGA in November last year you told a news conference it was only a proposal. Your organisation was ready to discuss them, but now the LTTE has gone beyond this stand. You want it implemented. Why have you changed positions drastically?

It is true that the ISGA was submitted as a proposal. We are calling to establish it now because the immediate needs of the people have not been met. We have studied similar conflicts in other countries and whenever a solution has been reached there have been similar interim administrative arrangements. Therefore what we are asking is not unusual. If you take the reality 65 to 75 percent of the north and east is under the control of the LTTE. We have a de facto state. Therefore that reality should be accepted by the government.

What is the last feedback you have got from the government about the ISGA proposals?

We have not got a positive response from the government. Two weeks ago Norway's Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgeson visited us. We did not get a positive response even from him. We reiterated our position, but no response has come from the government so far. No satisfactory answers have been given to us. We will stick to our original position.

Minister Mangala Samaraweera has announced that fresh proposals are being drafted.?

We have seen all these reports in the media. But officially we have not been informed. I do not know how effective these fresh proposals would be.

But are you willing to consider such fresh proposals?

It is after studying so many events in the past that we have drafted the ISGA proposals. We have amended our previous proposals. If the government prepares proposals it will not fulfill the aspirations of people whereas we believe our proposals will fulfill their needs. Governments in the south have not been able to prepare proposals that suit the needs of the people here.

But are you willing to consider fresh proposals from the government?

Our proposals submitted to the government have been endorsed by a mandate from the Tamil people. The TNA asked for such a mandate so we can talks based on this mandate only. Our leadership is firm on the proposals given. We can't comment on what the government will come up with.

(continued from page 12)

EPDP petitions to missions

EPDP members marched in front of several key diplomatic missions shouting slogans and carrying placards earlier in the day condemning what they as 'the LTTE's killing spree' and urging diplomats to help end the carnage. Over 250 EPDP members marched to US, British, Netherlands and German diplomatic missions starting from the Indian High Commission in Colombo 3. EPDP members who arrived from the North and East to attend the funeral of Balanadarajah Iyer also joined in the protest march. They also demanded that the SLMM should open its eyes and urged that members of other Tamil parties be allowed to live in peace.

Former Wanni District Parliamentarian S. Sivadasan and former Ampara district MP Shankar Gunasekaram visited the heads of diplomatic missions of India, United States, Britain, Germany, France and Netherlands, which chairs the EU, to hand over a memorandum which urged them to halt the killing by the LTTE of political opponents who are engaged in legitimate political work to which every citizen of this country has a right according to the Constitution of Sri Lanka, an EPDP source said. "The international community can play a major role in curbing such atrocities of the LTTE and saving the innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka," the petition said.

The funeral of Bala Nadarja Iyer took place on the 19th of August 2004. The body was placed at the EPDP Headquarters at Park Road, Colombo for the public and leaders to pay their last respects. Later it was taken to the Kanatte Burial Grounds to perform the last rights. Among the speakers were Minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle, JVP heavy weight Wimal Weerawansa, Dew Gunasekara of CP , D. Siddarthan leader of PLOTE, Patalee Champika Ranawaka of JHU, former Parliamentarian Ven. Baddegama Samitha and Ven. Watinapaha Somananda. Among the politicians who came to pay their last respects to the late Balanadaraja were Minister Mangala Samaraweera, Ven. Dr. Omalpe Sobhitha, Ven. Athuraliye Ratana, Dr. Jayalath Jayawardena, Alavi Moulana and Raja Collure. ❑

Web: www.carltonleisure.com Email: info@carltonleisure.com
SRILANKAN'S NO1 PREFERRED TRAVEL AGENT
CARLTON LEISURE
Worldwide Travel & Tours
"Fly with us once, Fly with us always"
IATA

SriLankan Airlines
£548+taxes
GAYA
Free Stopover in Colombo
(10 Sept.-31 Oct)
£470+taxes
BANGKOK
(10 Sept.-9 Dec)

COLOMBO
£450+taxes(10 Sept - 9 Dec)
£480+taxes(10 Sept - 31 Oct)
FREE extensions to any one of the following destination: Madras, Trichi, Trivandrum, Cochin, Calicut, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Bombay, Delhi
£470+taxes
SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR
Free Stopover in Colombo
(10 Sept. - 30 nov)

LOW SEASON FARES TO COLOMBO
Royal Jordanian fr £350
Etihad fr £350
Gulf Airlines fr £380
Kuwait Airways fr £360
Austrian Airlines fr £545

Qatar Airways
£360 +taxes
COLOMBO
BANGKOK £330 + taxes
SINGAPORE £350 + taxes
KUALA LUMPUR £360 + taxes
DUBAI £215 + taxes
£420 +taxes
TRIVANDRUM, COCHIN, HYDRABAD

Canada Special from £399 +taxes
TORONTO / MONTREAL / OTTAWA HALIFAX
from Manchrster & Gatwick

SPECIAL FARES & SERVICES
COLOMBO - JAFFNA - COLOMBO
£45
Subject to LODON to COLOMBO ticket purchased from us

SPECIAL TOUR PACKAGES
Please call our hotline 020 8426 1266
tours@carltonleisure.com
★ 14 day DISCOVER 3 COUNTRIES IN FAR EAST
(DEPARTURE: 02 Sept, 27 Oct,10 Nov, 21 Dec.)
★ 8 day BUDDHIST PILGRIMAGE TOUR
(DEPARTURE: 13 Oct, 27 Oct, 10 Nov,17 Nov, 24 Nov, 1Dec, 14 Dec, 21 Dec)
★ 9 day THE ANCIENT EGYPT
(DEPARTURE: 10Sept, 27Oct,12Nov,12Dec, 24Dec)
★ 13 day SPLENDID CHINA
★ 10 day TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA
★ 10 day GOLDEN TRIANGLE
[Special hotel rates worldwide available on request]
TAILOR MADE PACKAGES AVAILABLE TO WORLDWIDE DESTINATIONS

FOR EMERGENCY TRAVEL CALL: 07796 174 376 or 07957 450 895

HARROW & WEMBLEY
299 RAYNERS LANE, HARROW
MIDDX, HA5 5EG
020 8426 1266

CENTRAL LONDON
68 GREAT PORTLAND STREET
LONDON, W1W 7NG
020 7636 7636

EAST LONDON & ESSEX
212A, HIGH STREET NORTH
EASTHAM, LONDON, E6 2JA
020 8586 7675

The JVP which is part of the government has been campaigning against the ISGA. Your response?

The problem is not ours. These actions could push us towards a war situation. If they are raising voices to deny the rights of Tamil people and if the President listens to them it could lead towards a war situation. The government should have a clear cut policy explaining that it is willing to solve our people's problems. The government should not listen to anti-Tamil opinions. It should be firm. It is up to the government to get the support of the JVP.

But the JVP represents an important segment of the government. Could this be ignored or would it be possible to convince the party?

The JVP, even before it joined the coalition was talking against the peace process. Even before elections it took up that position. President Kumaratunga knew the JVP's stand but yet went ahead to get its support. It is the President who helped the JVP to get to a strong position. Therefore it is her duty to convince them.

Do you believe the President could get the support of the JVP?

It is the President's duty and responsibility.

One of the latest LTTE demands to return to the negotiating table is that the government should stop all connections with renegade leader Karuna. Has this changed?

For the government to have links with Karuna is not a healthy situation for the peace process. Particularly with the support of the Sri Lankan Army to have connections is not good. The aim of Karuna's group is to disrupt normalcy. If the government is coming forward for the peace process genuinely it should not get involved with Karuna. That could hamper the peace process.

What about your condition that the government should stop all links with Karuna.

Yes, that is also a condition because the government links with Karuna could seriously affect the peace process.

But the Government is denying links with Karuna?

Though the government is denying any links with Karuna there is no indication that the Army has severed its links with Karuna. The army has been involved in killings in Batticaloa. According to the Cease-Fire agreement signed in February 2002, other armed groups cannot be allowed to function in Batticaloa. It is the government's responsibility to stop the killings taking place in Batticaloa.

It is reported that the LTTE is involved in the killings. Over the past two weeks more than 20 killings have been reported. What do you say?

We deny LTTE members have been responsible. We believe that a faction of Karuna's group is responsible for these killings. Even the killings at Kottawa were carried out by another splinter group.

But that is not accepted by many. There is evidence to suggest that the LTTE is responsible for the killings in the east?

The LTTE is not responsible. These killings are taking place in the government controlled areas. This is due to a further split in Karuna's group. The agenda of these groups is to destabilize the situation.

Do you admit that Karuna's group is a threat to your organisation and how do you hope to overcome this situation?

The situation in areas under us in Batticaloa is under control. These incidents take place in government controlled areas But the government has not been able to control the situation. Karuna's group is not a threat to the LTTE but certainly a threat to the peace process.

How do you hope to overcome this problem?

That is not our problem. We can handle any situation. It is the responsibility of the government to control the situation. It is not only Karuna's group that is being helped by the Army. A government minister Douglas Devananda is also helping Karuna

It can worsen the situation.

Mr. Devananda is a minister of President Kumaratunga's cabinet and her government has declared that it is committed to the peace process. Your comments?

This is a clear indication that the President is not honest. How can the government deny that it is not helping Karuna. Mr. Devananda who is part of the Cabinet is helping Karuna. This shows the President's double standards. The government's double standards are further proved as it has given an important position to Mr. Devananda. This is a contradiction' within the government which wants to restart talks.

Have you taken up the Devananda issue with the Norwegian facilitators?

Yes. The government's actions do not support its claim that it is ready to start talks, though it tries to blame the LTTE for delaying the talks.

Is the Devananda issue also delaying the talks?

We do not want to link this issue with resuming peace talks. But this issue can affect the cease-fire agreement. We also have a fear that if this situation continues the whole peace process will collapse.

Mr. Helgesen after his recent talks expressed serious concern about the stalemate in the peace process. Are you also concerned?

We too are concerned about the stalemate. According to section 1.8 of the ceasefire agreement, no other armed group can operate in the north and east. But the government has allowed another armed group to operate in Batticaloa. That is a dangerous trend. The people's confidence has been shaken. Our aim is to find a solution as soon as possible. This stalemate could lead to a dangerous situation and it is worsening by the day.

Mr. Helgessen said that the war had only frozen due to the Cease-fire and it is now 'beginning to melt at the edges'.Any comment?

It is difficult to maintain this peaceful atmosphere without restarting talks. If you want to have peace you have to resume negotiations. It is difficult to go on this way. The dialogue between the two sides is necessary. The current stalemate is dangerous.

Shouldn't the LTTE also share responsibility?

No. We have given strict orders to our cadres not to violate the Ceasefire Agreement Minister Samaraweera said that the government has shown flexibility and commitment and the LTTE should do the same.

It is pointless talking of flexibility without action. The LTTE has put forward its demands expecting a respectable solution. As far as we are concerned we are flexible.The government is not responding to our demands and showing its flexibility. Governments have been changing their positions. Our position has been the same.

The LTTE has been repeatedly accused by the UNICEF and others of recruiting child soldiers.

For the past two and a half years normality has not returned. There has been no programme implemented for children to improve their welfare. No programmes for the rehabilitation of children. Underage children are continuously coming to join us.

Are you admitting that children are joining or that you have child recruits?

Yes. But these children are coming voluntarily. This is due to the absence of a proper rehabilitation programme.

But the UNICEF has accused you of releasing child soldiers and recruiting them again? Have you explained your position to the UNICEF?

Last month we returned 34 children, but two weeks later most of these children came back. Now the LTTE is directly involved in rehabilitation work.We have ex-

(continued on next page)

SHANKARA ASIAN ARTS

101 Preston Road, Wembley HA9 8NN

020 7402 2033 - 020 8904 1319 - 07947 127778

Seeks (1) A Carnatic Veena Specialist (2) A Bharatha Natyam Exponent and (3) A Carnatic Vocal Music professional. They should be of proven ability to coach advanced students in the United Kingdom and Europe. The initial contract would be for two years on a salary of £ 18,000 per annum. They will be required to perform at prestigious venues in the United Kingdom and Europe.

Please E-mail your applications to Amara Perinpanathan to:- apnathan @ btinternet.com or post to the above address. Applications close on 20th September 2004.

SHANKARA ASIAN ARTS

Cross Currents

Sathya

PART I - July 1983 pogrom:
Belated apology

Twenty-one years after one of the most meticulously planned and executed state-sponsored pogrom in world's contemporary history by the then President J.R.Jayewardene and his henchmen in the cabinet, the present Head of State President Chandrika Kumaratunga apologized to the Tamil people and the Nation.

The occasion for this historic apology was a symbolic ceremony on Friday 23rd July at the Presidential Secretariat, where some of the victims of 'Black July' were awarded compensation, following the findings and recommendations of the Presidential Truth Commission. Although the setting-up of the Truth Commission under the PA Government a few years ago was dictated largely by partisan politics aimed at creating maximum embarrassment for the UNP and did not conform to the norms and practices of Truth Commissions elsewhere, the apology by the President was unconditional and was by no means partisan. The operative section in her address needs to be etched in our collective memory, so that the barbarism demonstrated by the State and by the mobs mobilized by it for the purpose of terrorising the Tamil people into submission is never repeated. Sathya likewise wishes to etch these words in his column.

To quote: "At least now I believe that I and we as a nation and especially the Sri Lankan State should come of age, look the truth in the face and make a national apology, first to all the victims of that day in Black July and then beyond them to the entire Nation. Perhaps it is the responsibility of the State and the Government to engage in that exercise first and foremost, and then all of us as the Nation, every citizen in this country should collectively accept the blame and make that apology to all of you here who are the representatives or the direct victims of that violence, and through you to all the other tens of thousands who suffered by these incidents. I would like to assign to myself the necessary task on behalf of the State of Sri Lanka, the Government and on behalf of all of us, all the citizens of Sri Lanka to extend that apology. It is late but I think it is still not too late."

The response on the part of the LTTE and their proxies in parliament was typical. For instance, S. Elilan Trincomalee District political head of the LTTE at a public meeting in Trincomalee in memory of the victims of the Welikada prison massacre in July 1983 is reported by the TamilNet website as saying, "We regard Sri Lanka's President Chandrika Kumaratunga's public apology for the 1983 pogrom against the Tamils as a deceptive attempt, driven by political expediency rather than principles to placate the Tamils." The TNA parliamentarians present typically took the cue and in their speeches cast aspersions on the motives of Chandrika Kumaratunga.

Sathya, who left the professional and social mainstream to join the Tamil National Movement precisely because of July 1983 pogrom, accepts the apology of the President unconditionally and without inhibitions. It was indeed an act of courage for Chandrika Kumaratunga to have articulated not only her sentiments, but the sentiments of the vast majority of the Sinhalese who were themselves horrified by the 1983 July pogrom. The burning of the Jaffna Library in 1981 and the anti-Tamil pogrom of 1983 which were entirely State-sponsored stand as symbols of eternal shame to the UNP. Sathya recalls the anger he felt when President J. R.Jayewardene and his key UNP cabinet ministers paraded before the TV after maintaining a deafening sound of silence for four long and bloody days of sheer barbarism by hoodlums and security service personnel under the patronage of prominent UNP politicians.

They in their statements simply ignored the traumatized Tamil People and instead sought the apology of the Sinhalese people for the shortages and long queues that had formed to buy bread because of the riots. The Tamils who had survived the carnage, of course, were either in refugee camps or too terrified to join any queues. Ranil Wickremesinghe was then a cabinet minister. He must acknowledge this, assume individual and collective responsibility, and apologise to the Tamil People if he is serious about reconciliation.

Likewise, it would have been morally, politically and historically more correct had the President also referred to mistakes made by her Government as well as the party that she belongs to. The passage of the "Sinhala Only" Act of 1956, the attack on Federal Party MPs by hoodlums in Galle Face Green as they were staging a satyagraha facing the Parliament, and the heckling of these Tamil MPS as they walked into parliament with blood-drenched shirts by Sinhalese parliamentarians, including Prime Minister S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike, the anti-Tamil riots of 1956 and 1958, the discriminatory education policy under the guise of 'standardization' in the early 1970s, and the indiscriminate arrests and incarceration in prison of Tamil youth political activists all contributed to the erosion of self-respect of the Tamils and the eventual resort to armed resistance by Tamil youths as a means of re-establishing that self-respect that their parents had lost.

Sathya also recalls with regret the feudal ceremony that was conducted to celebrate the capture of Jaffna from the grip of the LTTE following Operation Riviresa in 1995. Although the Tamil People also abhorred the manner in which the LTTE engineered a forced exodus of civilians out of Jaffna during Operation Riviresa that led to immense deprivation and massive displacement of the people of Jaffna, it is clear that the public ceremony with Colonel Ratwatte walking up to President Kumaratunga to hand over the scroll announcing the capture of Jaffna was feudal, silly and pompous. It also hurt the sensitivities of the Tamil people, including those who bitterly resented the LTTE. Victories in battles are not something to be celebrated, since there are also defeats that may follow. That is the nature of War as the disas-

(continued from page 16)
plained the position and also given a master plan on child rehabilitation to the UNICEF. We are expecting the UNICEF to discuss the matter with us.

Some say that you continue to recruit children because Karuna's issue has affected recruitment.

Irrespective of Karuna's problems, we have been able to maintain our strength. The cadres who Karuna disbanded are coming back and re-joining us.

The ceasefire has lasted 31 months. Don't you admit that life has improved?

There has been not that much of an improvement. The problem of unemployment is high. The people have not been able to return to their homes so far.

The Eelanathan published in Kilinochchi this week said that the President had reportedly told a foreign media agency that she wants a direct dialogue with the LTTE. Any comments?

I can't comment about her statements. From time to time and day to day the President changes her position. In 1995 we had direct talks with the President and the talks failed. It is better to have a facilitator.

Does the President's changing stand affect the peace process?

The current situation shows the inability of the President to take a firm decision on the peace process.

Given this situation do you foresee a threat of the country sliding back to war ?

We are willing to find a solution through a dialogue, but if the war is forced on us we would have no option.

trous "War for Peace" campaign later revealed, when the State lost territory as well as manpower.

Be that as it may, this is supposed to be peace times. Although, we are not in a post-conflict situation, the time for reconciliation is NOW. It is neither too early nor too late. In this context, the time has also come for the LTTE as well as other Tamil ex-militant organizations which entered the democratic mainstream, to extend an apology to the Sinhala and Muslim Peoples for attacks against innocent civilians and ethnic cleansing that took place in the name of "liberation". The Anuradhapura massacre on Poya Day on May 14, 1985 when more than 150 pilgrims who had thronged the city were mowed down and the ethnic cleansing of the Muslims from the North, including massacres in mosques in the East, in the 1990s although carried out by the LTTE are just two of numerous such atrocities that were carried out by the LTTE and other Tamil militant organizations. They, in the same manner that President Kumaratunga extended an apology on the part of the State as well as all Sri Lankans for the 1983 July pogrom, owe the Sinhala and Muslim Peoples an unconditional apology on behalf of the Tamil People in whose name these atrocities were committed.

In any event, Sathya, a one time spokesperson and a member of the leadership of a Tamil politico-military organization which later joined the democratic mainstream only to soil its hands in that polluted stream, extends an apology to the Sinhalese and Muslim peoples. He expects his former comrades to do likewise.

The lessons that Sathya learnt about the seeds of violence in relation to the ethnic conflict can be summed as follows. Firstly, the peaceful and non-violent forms of struggle against institutionalised discrimination by the State may not have taken a violent form if not for the use of violence by the State to crush these non-violent and democratic forms of struggle. The ethnic conflict may well have become protracted and intractable. But, it was the violence unleashed by the State to crush all forms of dissent that led to the ethnic conflict itself becoming violent. Secondly, the victims of violence soon become the mirror image of the perpetrators of violence. That is what happened to Tamil militancy. It began to acquire the ugly face of the State that it was fighting against.

The lesson that Sathya learnt (or is in the process of learning) on the seeds of peace and reconciliation can be summed as follows. While the past must be addressed in order to reach the future, the present is an all important key to reconciliation, since it is in the present that the past ends and the future begins. Let us acknowledge the past, but not get bogged down in it. Let us rectify ourselves in the present and envision a better future, since the future is always carved out in the present.

To be overburdened by both the remorse of the past and the anxieties of the future only lead to a state of paralysis.

In sum, let us walk hand in hand in the collective endeavour of making this island of ours one country that belongs to all, while recognizing the full richness of our respective ethnic, religious and cultural diversities. It is not utopia. It is the only existential path to survival.

PART II: The troubled peace process: Time for a reality check

The peace process is clearly stalled. There are no signs of the recommencement of direct negotiations which were suspended last year when the LTTE sent a letter to Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe dated 21st April, 2003 that it had "decided to suspend its participation in the negotiations for the time being."

However, the LTTE stressed that it was still committed to a negotiated settlement and was not pulling out of the peace process, although its spokespersons on several occasions characterised the 6 rounds of talks from September 2002 to March 2003 in venues spanning Oslo to Hakone as a 'waste of time'.

While direct negotiations ('Track One' negotiations in conflict resolution jargon) remains suspended, the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) signed on February 22, 2002 by the then Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and LTTE leader Velupillai Pirabhakaran with the stated objective of "bringing an end to armed hostilities" and create "a positive atmosphere in which further steps towards negotiations on a lasting solution can be taken" has so far prevented a large scale outbreak of hostilities or war between the two parties.

However, the period since the signing of the ceasefire agreement also witnessed gross human rights violations that included child conscription, political killings, abductions and extortion from the very inception. The perpetrator was the LTTE.

The recent round of killings and child re-recruitment, particularly in the Eastern province, although a direct fall-out of the internecine conflict within the LTTE has spilled over into the heart of Colombo city as well as, according to unconfirmed reports trickling in last week, into the LTTE's nerve centre in Vanni.

To further compound the deteriorating security situation, neither Colombo nor Kilinochchi seem to be clear about the agenda of talks, if and when they do start.

While the LTTE has been consistently insisting that "institutionalizing" its Interim Self-Governing Authority (ISGA) proposal forwarded to the UNF Government in November, 2003 should form the sole basis for negotiations and should be de-linked from the process of seeking a final political solution, the present UPFA Government has been equally persistent that any interim arrangement should be part of a final political and constitutional settlement.

However, it now appears that President Chandrika Kumaratunga is willing to show some flexibility in commencing negotiation on an interim authority as indicated by the press release, following her meeting with Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgessen on July 27, where

Motor & Home Insurance

All Classes of Insurance Transacted
At Very Competitive Rates
Young Drivers Specialists
Special Rates for Ladies/Mature Drivers

● Building ● Fire Liability
● Shop/Office ● Health Insurance

Instalment Terms Available
Computerised Quotes

MEMBER

J. Kulendran General Insurance
STANDARDS COUNCIL

Beddington Insurance Services (Wimbledon) Limited
157A, Hartfield Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 3TJ.
Tel: 020 8543 5181
Fax: 020 8543 7158
We Excel in The Personal Service We Provide

it was stated that her government was "willing and is keen to commence negotiations on an Interim Authority within the framework of a united state".

The hawks in her ranks, however, managed to insert a lead story in the Daily News of on August 4 with screaming headlines, "UPFA says 'no' to LTTE's ISGA proposals". The story attributed this stance to President Kumaratunga and cited SLFP General Secretary Maitripala Sirisena as the source.

As a case of confusion confounded or as confusion clarified, the Daily News the following day carried the following clarification that "the Government emphasises that these media reports attributed to the statement said to have been made by the President at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Alliance Government at the President's House recently are totally misleading the public. In fact, what was stated at the meeting by the President was that the Government's stance on the resumption of peace talks with the LTTE remains unchanged."

So, what exactly is the stance of the Government? This was clarified in the Government's official website which comes directly under the Presidential Secretariat, where it was stated that "The president maintains that the government of Sri Lanka is willing to discuss with the LTTE its proposals for an Interim Administration alongside the talks to reach a final solution acceptable to all communities."

But, the issue remains contentious since the LTTE has been insistent on its position that its ISGA proposal should constitute the sole basis for negotiations.

In other words, we may well be heading towards a uni-linear and a single-issue agenda trajectory which is precisely what the LTTE has been propelling the peace process towards.

One may recall that at the 2nd Session of Talks at Rose Gardens, Thailand from 31 October to 3 November, 2002, a decision was taken by the Government and the LTTE to set up 3 Sub-committees. These were the Sub-Committee on Immediate Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Needs in the North-East (SIHRN), the Sub-Committee on De-escalation and Normalization and the Sub-Committee to commence work in connection with relevant political matters.

As regards SIHRN, great pains were taken to demonstrate that it was not an interim administration. This was once again seen as a pragmatic and innovative measure to accommodate LTTE concerns that the formation of an interim administration within existing constitutional provisions would tantamount to it accepting the Sri Lankan constitution as it presently stands.

This is seen as an anathema by the LTTE After several months of intense activities centred around SIHRN the LTTE in a letter addressed to the Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister on May 21, 2003, requested him to inform Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe that the LTTE now wanted an "interim administrative structure" to be set-up with "adequate powers to undertake North-eastern reconstruction and development activities".

Several months earlier the LTTE had already withdrawn from the Sub-Committee on De-escalation and Normalization in view of issues relating to High Security Zones (HSZs) in Jaffna.

What is further revealing is that the Sub-Committee on political parties where it was decided that "the parties will jointly and separately address in depth, at the current stage of the peace process, relevant subjects such as other peace processes, political solutions to ethnic conflicts, models and systems of governments, issues of post-conflict transition, coordination of international assistance, and reconciliation processes" never even met.

As a matter of fact at the 6th Session of talks in Hakone Japan from 18-24 March, 2003 the Government and the LTTE decided to "expand some preliminary issues and a framework for political matters into a 'complete plan' at the 7th Session of talks.

This of course did not take place since a month later the LTTE opted out of direct negotiations and Track One negotiations went into a state of limbo.

From the above it is evident that the LTTE set the agenda and shaped events where the agenda for talks finally became reduced to a single issue, namely the setting up of an interim administration for the North-East with full plenary powers of governance over the North-East under the hegemony of the LTTE, ideally through extra-constitutional means. This is clearly spelt out in the ISGA proposals of the LTTE which was unveiled with much fanfare in late October, 2004.

So, where does one proceed from here? Firstly, it is imperative that the UPFA Government should assume a clear and a consistent position as regards the agenda for negotiations.

The constituent members of the UPFA Government should understand that the term "Government" includes all its consistent members. In this, it is imperative that the SLFP and the JVP, should clarify their respective position on the agenda for talks.

Despite differences between the JVP and President Chandrika Kumaratunga on how to advance the peace process, which may have well prompted her to step down from the chair of the Executive Committee of the UPFA as a signal that she would proceed with her peace strategy with or without the JVP, the observation made by a high ranking member of the JVP and Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Anura Kumara Dissanayake at a recent Cabinet briefing is encouraging and should be a sufficient basis for the SLFP and the JVP to formulate a common negotiation strategy vis-a-vis the LTTE. The observation was that, "there should be an administrative structure for the North and East, during the transition period from the current situation to a final settlement. But our stand is that the Interim Authority must be part of the final solution".

It is for the UPFA Government and its "think tank" now to formulate a clear proposal that embodies the above and link the entire transitional process spanning the interim to the final.

Where appropriate the proposal should draw on the LTTE's ISGA proposal which in fact contains core political issues as perceived by the LTTE. The time has also come for civil society to take a more proactive role in formulating its own proposals which may be placed before the Government and the LTTE and all other stakeholders as a means of breaking the current impasse. Meanwhile all steps should be taken to ensure that the ceasefire holds and that the parties adhere to the ceasefire agreement.

Despite the deficiencies in the ceasefire agreement, the entire peace process at present hinges on the scrupulous adherence to the provisions in the ceasefire agreement. Any tendency towards adventurism at this stage by the two parties could well signal the total collapse of the peace process and the renewal of war.

However, it is also imperative that adherence does not mean appeasement. The transition from an administrative mechanism to the interim to the final cannot be just a mechanical process that is devoid of human rights, including pluralism, democracy and the right to life.

Contrary to perceptions in sections of civil society as well as the international community that human rights, pluralism and democracy over-burden a fragile peace process, it is the recognition and observance of these principles that nourishes and sustains any peace process.

If today the peace process in Sri Lanka is fragile it is precisely due to the violation of human rights, and the principles of pluralism and democracy. This is something that we in civil society should understand, even if the Government and the LTTE fail to do so. ❑

Peace Process: Reaching a 'hurting stalemate'

Jayadeva Uyangoda

Sri Lanka's peace process is, to use a rhetorical understatement, in a stalemate. It is a hurting stalemate of a particular kind in a situation of no war.

This perhaps is an original contribution that the Colombo government and the LTTE have jointly made to the theory of hurting stalemate developed by William Zartman, an American political scientist attached to the US Institute of Peace, Washington D.C. Zartman's celebrated theory suggested that parties to an intrastate civil war are likely to seek negotiated options when the war and violence bring them to a state of 'hurting stalemate.'

The peculiar situation in Sri Lanka at present is that in the absence of peace negotiations, the UPFA government and the LTTE are experiencing a stalemate that hurts. They will have to find a win-win outcome in returning to the negotiation table.

Vulnerability

One specific characteristic of this mutually-hurting-negotiation stalemate is the state of vulnerability which both President Kumaratunga and the LTTE leadership find themselves in.

President Kumaratunga's state of vulnerability in relation to the resumption of negotiations with the LTTE arises from the lack of political support for such an initiative within the coalition she leads. Her main coalition partner, the JVP, is not only opposed to Kumaratunga's flexibility to accept the LTTE's ISGA proposals as the starting point of talks. It has also launched an island-wide campaign to mobilize public opposition to such a negotiation move. Kumaratunga's own party, the SLFP, does not seem to openly back her on this issue. Many of the SLFPers, including her ministers and MPs, appear to be very reluctant to take up a position on negotiations that would not agree with the JVP's stand. In the absence of an initiative similar to the Sudu Nelum movement of the 1990s, the JVP is now giving ideological leadership to the SLFP and the entire Alliance. The JVP's ideology on the negotiations is one of hardline nationalist statism. It is obviously to ensure some autonomous political space in dealing with negotiations that Kumaratunga recently quit her position as the leader of the UPFA coalition.

Even then, without explicit support from her own party and amidst opposition from her main coalition partner, and therefore feeling politically vulnerable, Kumaratunga is unlikely to resume talks with the LTTE, until she finds some favorable political conditions that make her own position stronger and unassailable.

Interregnum

Meanwhile, the state of vulnerability that the LTTE leadership is experiencing arises from the Karuna revolt in the Eastern province and the subsequent developments. Quite apart from the military setback that the LTTE suffered after the disbanding of the military units in the Batticaloa and Amparai districts, Karuna's dissidence has challenged the LTTE politically, at three crucial levels.

Firstly, it has irreversibly damaged the monolithic unity of the LTTE as a politico-military organization. Secondly, the cry of Eastern Tamil nationalism has undermined the LTTE's deeply held concept of a unified Tamil nation. Thirdly, it has also seriously undermined the Tamil nationalist claim for a territorially unified Tamil homeland. Moreover, the LTTE Vanni leadership is also quite angry that elements of the Colombo government have made attempts to use the Karuna revolt to weaken the LTTE militarily.

It appears that the LTTE is unlikely to return to the negotiation table until it militarily crushes the Karuna dissidence and bring the Eastern province under its control.

The bottom line is that although both President Kumaratunga and the LTTE may be keen to return to the negotiation table, they are not likely to do so within the next two to three months. Both sides need a period of political consolidation before resuming talks. In this optimistic reading of the current negotiation impasse in Sri Lanka, the few months ahead are an interregnum that can be creatively used, particularly by President Kumaratunga in Colombo. What she could fruitfully do is work towards building some measure of political dialogue and consensus within her own coalition on the question of negotiations with the LTTE and the nature of the political settlement that might evolve through negotiations.

Two-Track Dialogue

Intra-coalition dialogue and consensus are becoming extremely urgent in the context of the increasingly nationalistic campaign that the JVP has launched throughout the country against a compromise with the LTTE. One of the key political problems of the UPFA is that it has not worked out a reasonably up-to-date political position on negotiations with the LTTE. Before they came into power, SLFP and JVP leaders had discussions on this issue but they were not able to come to a common position; they agreed to disagree.

After forming the government in April, they have not even reviewed their programme whereas in India, the new coalition government, a few days after the elections, worked out a new common minimum programme. In Sri Lanka's coalition regime, there seems to be very little internal policy discussions at the leadership level.

But, there is one issue on which President Kumaratunga should not avoid an internal dialogue and consensus within the coalition. It is the next phase of negotiations and the compromise that the government will seek with the LTTE. Left to its own party agenda within the coalition, the JVP will continue to carry on its militant opposition to a compromise with the LTTE, thereby further restricting the political space for President Kumaratunga to resume negotiations.

Incidentally, the JVP at present constitutes a great paradox in Sri Lankan politics. Led by young politicians with a radical self-image and tremendous energy, it represents some of the conservative and counter-reformist impulses of Sri Lankan society. This tendency of the JVP has also been strengthened by the ideological grip that a few Sinhalese nationalist academics of the Indian RSS-type have managed to maintain over the young JVP leadership. The misplaced radicalism of the JVP is to oppose any state reform initiative, interim or long-term, although any serious advancement towards peace in Sri Lanka objectively requires radical re-working of the nation's political structures.

Conversion

Indeed, if President Kumaratunga is serious about bringing peace to Sri Lanka, she has to work on two fronts simultaneously, the LTTE and the JVP. Dialogue and constructive engagement are required for success on both fronts. The nature and dynamics of this two-track dialogue will have to be different. The dialogue with the LTTE has a formal character and it is called 'negotiations.' That dialogue will seek a framework within which the Sri Lankan state and a secessionist ethnic nation, with structures of a parallel state, can co-exist in one broad political unit without war and violence.

In the other dialogue, the President's task is to convince and convert the leadership of the JVP, who represent a large mass of the Sinhalese intermediate classes, that

(continued on page 35)

Call for respect for human rights and humanitarian standards

In the background of increasing number of politically motivated targeted killings accompanied by gross violation of human rights and humanitarian standards, in a statement released on 10 August 2004, the Peace Support Group in Sri Lanka has called "on the international community to support an initiative to send out a high level fact finding team consisting of representatives of the four Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Conference and with the participation of Ian Martin, the Human Rights Advisor to the peace process, to work in close collaboration with the Peace Secretariat in Colombo and with the newly created NorthEast Secretariat on Human Rights in Kilinochchi. This becomes necessary because the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, in its recent statements, has indicated its inability to pursue investigations regarding these killings."

Following is the full text of the PSG's statement:

The Peace Support Group is deeply concerned by the continuing cycle of killings, violence and counter-violence that is fast taking our country backwards into an era of lawlessness and widespread human rights abuses.

Over 40 people in the North and East have been assassinated in the four months from April to July 2004 as a consequence of their political affiliation. There may be many more whose names and deaths have gone unrecorded. In addition, this number does not reflect those from the two contending factions of the LTTE who were killed in battle during the fierce fighting in Vakarai in early May and in and around Thoppigala jungles in mid-June.

Among the names available to us are members of the LTTE, members of the LTTE breakaway group led by 'Karuna', members of the EPDP, and members of the intelligence units of the security forces. Tragically, those killed also include elected officials such as the Chairperson of the Alayadivembu Pradesheeya Sabha, V. Ravindran, public officials such as K. Sivarasa, Grama Sevaka of Karadiyanaru, academics such as Prof. K. Thambiah, Head of the Economics Department of the Eastern University and media persons such as G. Nadesan, journalist and broadcaster.

In July, the tensions also manifested in the south, with the attempted assassination of Minister and EPDP leader Douglas Devananda on July 7 that saw four Police officers and the suicide bomber herself killed while over twenty others in the Kollupitiya (Colombo 3) Police Station at the time of the explosion were injured. On July 24, 8 youths alleged to be Karuna supporters were murdered as they slept in Kottawa and on July 31, former PLOTE member Kandiah Yoga-rasa (Mohan) was assassinated on the streets of a very residential part of Colombo in broad daylight.

We strongly feel that these killings constitute a gross violation of the right of all Sri Lankans to hold and express a political opinion, and to live free of violence and intimidation.

We are very clear in our understanding that these assassinations reflect the growing deterioration of respect for human rights and democratic processes in Sri Lanka. They have a grave impact on the peace process and on the continuation of the Ceasefire Agreement, and in fact constitute a violation of the terms of the CFA.

TRICO SHIPPING & AIR FREIGHT WORLDWIDE

OFFERS YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO REFUSE

SEND 3 TEA CHESTS TO SRI LANKA
AND GET THE 4TH ONE FREE
SEND 2 TEA CHESTS TO MADRAS & COCHIN
FOR £75.00

TRICO INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING LTD.
Woodgreen
Business Centre,
Unit 4, Building C
Clarendon Road,
London, N12 6XJ
Phone:
+44 20 8888 8787
Fax:
+44 20 8889 5445
E-mail:
trico@tricoshipping.com

CALL US NOW TO BOOK A COLLECTION

TEL: 020 - 8888 8787

TRICO INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING LTD

WEEKLY SAILING
TO COLOMBO
MADRAS & COCHIN
LOADING EVERY
WEDNESDAY
FOR SAILING
EVERY FRIDAY
TRANSIT TIME:
17 DAYS

Both the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission that oversees the implementation of the Ceasefire as well as the Deputy Foreign Minister of Norway during his recent visit to the island have expressed concern regarding the situation in terms of its negative consequences for the peace process. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch issued a joint Statement on July 27 expressing their grave concern regarding the deterioration of the situation in the East.

In this context, we note with concern a reluctance on the part of all concerned within the country, the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE, as well as the international community as a whole, to address these incidents as human rights abuses.

In addition, we note with concern that allegations of military involvement in certain incidents have not been dealt with any degree of transparency and accountability by the authorities. While security considerations and the need to maintain some degree of secrecy over the present peace process can be taken into account in some instances, the government must see that the perception of collaboration between the army and armed groups that violate the Ceasefire Agreement pose a threat to the peace process.

The fact that all the killings take place in public spaces such as the road, bus stands, and markets, in prison where inmates are under the custodial protection of the state, even at religious festivals has meant that they instill a high sense of fear among ordinary civilians as they go about their day to day life. In addition, the slowness to acknowledge that there is a real crisis in the law and order situation in the east creates an environment of impunity with which we are grimly familiar.

There is almost no public condemnation of these killings coming from civil society whether in the south or in the north and east. This in turn sends a clear message to all those responsible for this spate of killings that they may strike again and again with no fear of punishment within the law. The killings, we are told, have been carried out by 'unidentified' gunmen. In most of the cases, Police have not made any arrests. Nor are they conducting investigations in a manner that could satisfy the public that the law and order situation is under control, and that the police are carrying out their task of law enforcement without prejudice.

This situation could lead to a very grave breakdown of law and order as well as a serious erosion of people's confidence in the ability of the law enforcement mechanisms to protect ordinary citizens of this country. In addition, it leads to a lack of confidence in the political leadership of Sri Lanka to be able to resolve crises within a democratic framework and through the processes of consensus building and negotiation that we have valued so highly as we endeavour to emerge from the ethnic conflict.

In these circumstances:

1. We appeal to the government and the LTTE, as signatories to the CFA, to take immediate steps to initiate discussions among the law enforcement agencies operating in their areas regarding the obstacles to pursuing investigations into these killings which have taken place in both LTTE controlled areas as well as in government controlled areas.

2. We ask for a public affirmation of the commitment by the two parties to the CFA that they will respect minimum humanitarian standards, as contained in Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, that prohibit violence to life and person, the taking of hostages and summary executions of those not actively engaged in the conflict.

3. We call on the international community to support an initiative to send out a high level fact finding team consisting of representatives of the four Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Conference and with the participation of Ian Martin, the Human Rights Advisor to the peace process, to work in close collaboration with the Peace Secretariat in Colombo and with the newly created NorthEast Secretariat on Human Rights in Kilinochchi. This becomes necessary because the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, in its recent statements, has indicated its inability to pursue investigations regarding these killings.

4. We also call on the international and national agencies working in the North and East to explore possibilities of establishing human rights monitoring mechanisms at the local and community level with the participation of international and local monitors using personnel and structures that could be agreed upon with the Peace Secretariats in Colombo and in Kilinochchi.

Signatories: *Sunila Abeysekera, Sunanda Deshapriya, Rohan Edrisinha, Kethesh Loganathan, Jehan Perera, Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu,Jeevan Thiagarajah, Joe William, Javid Yusuf,*

NORWICH UNION HOME INSURANCE

BUILDING & CONTENTS

INSURANCE

We are the privileged agent for NORWICH UNION for Home Insurance.
We at ARM can negotiate with NU and provide you the cover to your individual requirements with Special Discount.
We will help you to save hundreds of pounds by transferring your existing Home Insurance to us.
We also provide you the best services from placing the cover to helping you to get the maximum benefit, in the event of a claim.
We transact Insurance Policy over the phone, no proposal f orm or Direct Debit Mandate to complete.
We are authorised to issue the policy online. Immediate cover and policy issued on the same day

COMPETITIVE PREMIUM & VALUABLE DISCOUNTS

P.SRINIVASAN IFA

PENSION * LIFE * SAVINGS * MORTGAGES * COMMERCIAL LOANS

ARM ASSOCIATES

MEMBER General Insurance

TEL: 020 8763 2221

FAX: 020 8763 2220

32 ABBOTS LANE, KENLEY, SURREY CR8 5JH

Internet: http://www.srinivasan.co.uk

E-mail: srini@srinivasan.co.uk

REGULATED BY THE FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

ATOL 75047

EMERGENCY TRAVEL ONLY »» »» -SRI LANKA -SOUTH INDIA -SINGAPORE

Please Call: 07956 676 360

The uneasy calm in Batticaloa

Amantha Perera

Krishna Vadivel's lasting memories of the war are the dead bodies, all over. She is a sixth grader living in Kokkadicholai in the LTTE controlled areas in Batticaloa. The town lies just 45 minutes from Batticaloa town, but Krishna's life would be extraordinarily different if she were to live across the lagoon in the town.

She is not just any ordinary civilian that we bumped into. She is related to Sivasithambaran Gopal alias Lt. Colonel Vishu, a one time high ranker of the LTTE's eastern command, now languishing somewhere in Kilinochchi following the Karuna rebellion.

"We sleep in peace now"

The two and half year old ceasefire has changed life in LTTE controlled areas in the east as with the rest of the country. "We sleep in peace now," said P. Jeyananden of Kannankudah. That much may be true, but just across the road from where she spoke lies the 'heroes' cemetery and the newest internment was that of Ramalingam Padmaseelan alias Lt. Col. Senathiraja, the slain Batticaloa political head of the LTTE. He is the highest-ranking casualty from the Wanni faction since the LTTE split along the lines of Karuna and Velupillai Pirapaharan.

The east is a smouldering inferno underneath the day to day hustle and bustle and according to military forces personnel stationed there, it is unlikely to cool down soon.

The LTTE has made a tactical withdrawal from its political offices in the district. The main office in Batticaloa has remained dysfunctional since Senathiraja was shot. The Valachchenai office has remained shut since April. According to residents nearby, they have not seen Tothilan, the former head of the office since April.

The Tigers maybe nonexistent politically, but are very much active taking on supporters of Karuna with deadly precision. Two weeks back, the LTTE arrested three people in Periyapulumalai inside their areas of control on suspicion of them being Karuna supporters. Arumugam Ravichandarn and Selevadorei Chandaraselan had two AK47 assault riffles, magazines and a mobile phone in their possession according to the LTTE. The Tigers said that they were interrogating the three. Last month, they killed two others who were caught in similar circumstances and dumped the bodies in a public place. The two were blamed for an attack on a LTTE female cadre camp and another attack.

On the night of August 3, Tiruparatnam Wimalendran, a Karuna supporter, was shot dead at Maveduwembu, Batticaloa. The army said that he had been ordered to report to the LTTE office at Karadiyanaru the day before but had refused to comply.

That morning, the EPDP office at Valachchenai was attacked around 7 a.m. Two grenades were lobbed into the office that sits across the road from an army camp. One exploded close to the main building injuring four occupants, including the EPDP head for Valachchenai, Siva.

Eliminating Karuna supporters

On Friday (6 August) morning, another person was shot dead at Kalutharalai south of Batticaloa. He was suspected to be a member of a paramilitary group operating in Batticaloa alongside the army. There are several such groups.

The tactic of eliminating or sidelining Karuna supporters extends all the way up to Kilinochchi. When Nilavini, Karuna's female military commander and three other female cadres fled to the east in June after accompanying Karuna to Colombo two months earlier, they said they had returned to Tiger ranks on their own free will. The four detailed how they had been treated shabbily by Karuna and his wife and finally left to their own devices. Last week details emerged that the Tigers may have used other tactics to get the four back to the east.

According to military sources, families of the four were taken into custody soon after they fled with Karuna and when the Tigers found out that Nilavini was in touch with one of her relatives, a message was conveyed to her that her family was in Tiger custody prompting the return. The women who were held in the east were transported to Wanni about two weeks ago, according to the same sources. They also said that another Karuna supporter, Regi, an intelligence wing cadre, may have been picked up in Colombo and taken to Wanni.

The LTTE can cross into areas under its command without much fuss or attention in the east unlike in the north.

The Tigers use the Vakaneri area to move from the north to the east and vice versa without informing the army or the SLMM. Cadres would travel down the Trincomalee-Batticaloa highway (A15) that runs through areas controlled by both sides. The LTTE cadres would thereafter take a right turn just before the first army post and trek through jungles and reach an area close to the Vakaneri camp and cross over.

Leaky spots

Suwarnam, the present LTTE head in Trincomalee, used the same route when he entered LTTE controlled areas in Batticaloa to attack Karuna and his supporters in April. Both the military and others with access to the LTTE confirmed that the route was being used by the Tigers. It is this route that is believed to have been used to transport the four women to Wanni.

Given the LTTE strength in the area, military sources observed that to plug the leaky spots, at least one full battalion had to be inducted.

There have been occasional confrontations between the army and the Tigers in the Vakaneri area. The Tiger bunker lines are visible from the army camp located near the cross-over point.

Most of the top Karuna loyalists - or those suspected by the Wanni command to be - are either dead or in Kilinochchi. There have been reports that a member of the gang who was later shot at Kottawa too was pressured using the family and finally he wilted. The families of these cadres live under tremendous pressure in the east, especially in areas under the Tigers. Vishu was taken to Kilinochchi in April. His family has not heard from him since. They do not know whether he is under arrest or just stationed there. The fear of reprisal prevents them from seeking help from the SLMM or any other authority.

Vishu's case is an interesting one. Hailing from the east, he rose through the ranks and was considered close to Karuna. He led a military attack in Welikanda and was injured in the leg. Vishu married another LTTE cadre, Ranjani, and according to some sources it was the LTTE hierarchy that pushed for the wedding. The couple now have a one-year-old daughter, Kanya.

Vishu's case

Vishu ran into problems with the high command when he was accused of financial misappropriation to build a house and was

demoted to look after forestry affairs in the east. His house remains half built just off the main road at Kokkadicholai. He and Karikalan had to report to Kilinochchi soon after the A15 was open for civilian traffic. There they were told not get too chummy with military officers. Karikalan left for the Wanni soon after Karuna rebelled. Vishu decided to stay on.

When Karuna rebelled, his critics say, Vishu sided with him, his supporters argue that Vishu stayed back in Kokkadicholai as there was no one else to oversee the activities. He was asked to report to Kilinochchi in April. "It makes sense why the families are nervous," said sources who deal with the LTTE regularly.

The Tigers have been so efficient in the elimination process that Karuna loyalists in Batticaloa have conveyed to security forces and police that they need protection. If not, they would have to flee or rejoin the Tigers.

From the beginning of the Karuna rebellion, the senior ranks in the east were aware of the level of reprisals from the central command. Take for instance the case of Tothilan - soon after Karuna raised the cry of autonomy, he told associates that he was Karuna's man. When the inevitable push came from Wanni, he switched sides, and said that he was Annai's (big brother aka Pirapaharan) man. Today he is missing.

Child recruitment

The LTTE is also continuing to recruit children, despite pressure from UNICEF and other international organisations. During the first four days of this month, SLMM had received complaints about five incidents of child recruitment. UNICEF, while acknowledging that recruitment was continuing, said that they were checking on the latest complaints.

The child soldier problem has been a persistent one and all that organisations like UNICEF can do is to pressure the LTTE, the final decision is up to the Tigers. "They (the LTTE) are free to lay any burden on the people," observed Rev. B.H. Miller who is based in Batticaloa.

The LTTE's public arm, meaning the political wing, has taken pains to minimise the damage caused by reports of recruitment. In Batticaloa, Kaushalyan, the political head, has appeared frustrated over the allegations, according to sources who have dealt with him.

Kaushalyan has appeared to be loath of commenting in public of late. An attitude that many have attributed to the eagle eye the Wanni command is keeping on the east. "He (Kaushalyan) would not want any take on him that sends the wrong vibes," the sources said.

He was however present at Tenaham in Kokkadicholai on August 5 when the LTTE handed over 24 children from a camp to UNICEF. UNICEF Head in Batticaloa, Andrea James too was present. The Tigers said that they released the children after checking their birth certificates. Military sources in the east said that there were many more children in the camp.

Forced recruitment

However, others who have access to the Tigers and the military said the Tigers were reacting to the criticism on child recruitment. The children appear to be those recruited recently. During the last few days there have been reports of Tigers taking away children during various festivals at temples.

In one such incident they had taken away a child who would turn 18 in three months. He had been recruited during the time when Karuna held sway. The boy was sent home by Karuna when he fled. Before he was forcibly taken away, the Tigers had coerced him to rejoin, without much success.

The Tiger military wing appears to be operating without acknowledging the political wing. In the east, a new military commander by the name of Ramnam had emerged since the Karuna split. He was a military cum intelligence operative in the east. He headed the intelligence wing in the east and used to operate out of 49 base in Kokkadicholai. After the Wanni command reclaimed the east, he rose within the ranks. Parents and relatives who complain of abductions and forced recruitment blame "Ramnam's group" most of the time. Ramnam has declined to meet with the SLMM or any other organisation.

The civilian population is trapped smack in the middle of all this with no hope of early resumption of talks. "There does not seem to be any will on either side to back off," Rev. Miller observed.

Both the government and the LTTE deny any involvement in the violence. They do blame each other. But it is obvious there are elements operating below the radar who are responsible for the killings and the violence. The talking parties deny any involvement while the killings continue. Ironic as it may sound, many in Batticaloa feel that if the LTTE succeeds in eliminating Karuna's power, the chances of the Tigers once again getting back to the table would be higher than now.

Secretary General, Government Peace Secretariat, Jayantha Dhanapala would have felt the unease in Batticaloa during his recent visit. Dhanapala had arrived in Batticaloa with the hope of meeting with LTTE representatives and had appeared disappointed of their absence at the meeting.

Several attendees at the meeting confirmed that no invitation to the LTTE had gone out from any of them and that if there was any such communication, then it was from Colombo to Kilinochchi. At the meeting and during his public meetings Dhanapala observed the government was keen to resume peace talks and that the Karuna split should not be a deterrent. He had urged civic leaders in Batticaloa to urge the public to support the effort.

If peace talks are to resume, then the east would now have to be given more attention than before. Batticaloa is a complex environment. The north, beyond Vavuniya is mostly mono-ethnic. The LTTE was successful in chasing the Muslims out of the north in the early 1990s. However, despite massacres in Kathankudi and Eravur in August 1990, the Muslims have remained in the east. And they are very much conscious about their identities.

In Eravur and Kathankudi, two towns that lie either side of Batticaloa, it is not unusual to find women in burkah, the traditional Muslim dress. Last week, the towns were deserted along with Valachchenai on August 3, the anniversary of the massacres. The three towns observed a hartal. There are also pockets of Sinhala settlements especially in Pasikudah. "We are a triple community," said Rev. Miller, describing the population.

Lack of water

For most civilians living close to the line of control, time and the cruelties of life do not allow the luxury of dwelling on peace and negotiations. The arid land and the simmering heat have resulted in the wells running dry. On the government-controlled side, families wait for hours next to water taps or until a bowzer arrives to fill up for the day. On the other side, families walk for miles to reach a trickle of a stream for the same purpose. On the line that divides 'Tiger land' and 'Lion land,' soldiers and policemen complain that each is only given five buckets of water per day for all daily needs.

Colombo might haggle over the ISGA and Kilinochchi may insist on that. On the front lines though just outside of Batticaloa, everyone would settle for another bucket of water for now.

- Sunday Leader, 08 AUG 2004

refugee action

SAFE HAVEN Yorkshire

VOLUNTARY Assisted RETURN and REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME 'VARRP'

North of England REFUGEE SERVICE

Options

Are you an asylum seeker or refugee who is considering returning home?

If you are thinking about returning to your home country, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) can help you return and establish your livelihood. IOM is an independent organisation working with migrants worldwide. Further information is available from IOM and our partners around the country - 'Choices' at Refugee Action, 'Options' at YMCA Glasgow and NERS (North of England Refugee Service) in the north east of England.

Choices, Options and NERS offer local information, advice and support to asylum seekers and refugees who are considering return home or are exploring options to stay in the UK. This independent, confidential service can help you to make an informed decision whether to stay in the UK or return home.

If you decide you would like to return home, IOM can help you through the 'Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme' (VARRP). This programme assists asylum seekers of all nationalities and has been running since 1998. IOM will:

- help you get the travel documents you will need
- arrange and pay for the flight to your home country
- meet you at the airport and help you with departure and arrival formalities
- assist with domestic transportation to your final destination
- offer reintegration support to establish your livelihood at home

Reintegration assistance is offered in your home country. It can cover vocational training courses, setting up a small business or access to education. Assistance is provided through IOM offices worldwide, and varies from country to country.

Contact IOM from anywhere in the UK for more information on how to apply to return home. Translated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and application forms are available on the website www.iomlondon.org

IOM London: Tel: 020 7233 0001 or **Free phone 0800 783 2332** Fax: 020 7233 3001 e-mail: varrp@iomlondon.org
or come to the office at 21 Westminster Palace Gardens, Artillery Row, London SW1P 1RR
(near St James's Park tube and Victoria station).

Contact Choices if you are in England or Wales and you are interested in exploring your options about staying in the UK or returning home. More information is available on the website www.refugee-action.org.uk

London office:	**Manchester office:**	**Leeds office:**	**Leicester office:**
3rd Floor, The Old Fire Station 150 Waterloo Road London SE1 8SB Tel: 020 7654 7700 Fax: 020 7401 3699	1 Tariff Street Manchester M1 2HF Tel: 0161 233 1200 or 0800 917 2719 (free from a landline) Fax: 0161 236 4285	Suite 7, Floor C, Josephs Well Hanover Walk Leeds LS3 1AB Tel: 0113 244 5345 Fax: 0113 243 5448	Muslim Community Resource Centre, Melbourne Centre, Melbourne Road Leicester LE2 0GU Tel: 0116 261 4846 Fax: 0116 251 1712

Contact NERS if you are in North East England and are interested in exploring your options about staying in the UK or returning home. More information is also available on the website www.refugee.org.uk

NERS: 3rd Floor, Forum House, The Forum, Wallsend High St, Tyne & Wear NE28 8LX
Tel: 0191 200 1199/1108 Fax: 0191 200 5929 e-mail: wallsend@refugee.org.uk

Contact Options if you are in Scotland and you are interested in exploring your options about staying in Scotland or returning home. More information is also available on the website www.ymcaglasgow.org

Options at YMCA Glasgow: 33 Petershill Drive, Glasgow G21 4QQ
Tel: 0141 557 2355 Fax: 0141 557 0874 e-mail: options@ymcaglasgow.org

IOM International Organization for Migration

This Programme is co-financed by the European Refugee Fund

Flickering hopes of peace tinged with fear

Dharisha Bastians in Kokkadicholai

Thanthonriesvaran, one of Sri Lanka's four Sivan kovils lies hidden deep inside Kokkadicholai, an area under LTTE control in the Batticaloa District. It towers over the land and is visible across abandoned paddy fields and over thatched roofs in the village. The kovil is much like Madhu Church say people in the area, and in the past Hindu pilgrims would flock to the site throughout the year. Today, after decades of war, the only pilgrims are the residents in the area and occasional visitors.

In the outer garden of the kovil, a frail old lady sells sweetmeats and snacks to pilgrims and worshippers that flock to this holy ground, having set up a little stand beneath the shade of an ancient tree. Paravi Vyramuthu is 65 years old and a great-grandmother. She has lost three sons to the war and is compelled to eke out a meagre living for her large extended family and her partially blind husband. Paravi's face and hands are worn, but she is surrounded by family members, many of whom keep her company as she sells her wares in the sweltering afternoon heat.

Asked what difference peace has made in her life, she answers sadly – "Peace cannot take things back to how they used to be." Her eyes remember a happier time, 30 years ago when the concept of war and its consequences had not yet made cynics of this island's people. "But of course we need peace for our lives to get back to normal, and peace is and always will be our hope," Paravi adds. She and her family survive each month on about Rs. 350 worth of the government's charitable loans in addition to the few hundred rupees she makes a month by selling sweet meats and crackers at the kovil. "We find it very difficult to survive on this small amount of money, and peace has not had an impact on our financial situation," Paravi revealed, claiming that despite the ceasefire agreement, few pilgrims crossed over to Kokkadicholai to pay homage at the kovil.

A lady holding a toddler walks up to the sweet stand. "This is Lieutenant Colonel Vishu's daughter," Paravi informs us, adding that the baby was just over a year old and had not seen her father in over three months. Following Karuna Aman's split with the LTTE, Vishu surrendered and was summoned to Kilinochchi, where he has been for over three months now. His family has heard nothing of his whereabouts since April this year. Vishu's baby daughter, Kanya is Paravi's great grand child and she was being tended by one of the old lady's daughters. Kanya's mother, Rajani who once belonged to the LTTE's women's brigade, lies seated on the porch of their humble home, not far from the sweet stand, looking barely over 20 years old.

Stopping by the kovil to interview Paravi, we never dreamt that her story would be so closely intertwined with the silent conflict ongoing in the east. But it is probable that virtually every family living in Kokkadicholai is touched in someway by the tension and fear prevalent in the area.

While the tension in the east appears at first glance to be merely an internal battle, too little is known about families like that of Paravi who are profoundly affected by these clashes, because in Kokkadicholai, each of their lives are inextricably linked to the LTTE.

Girl with a 'disarming' smile

"I want to be a teacher when I grow up," the little girl who saunters up to the sweet stand says. Asked why she would choose that particular profession, pat came the reply – "to help the downtrodden."

The girl with the noble ambitions and the beautiful smile is just 13 years old. Her name is Krishna Vadivel and she is Paravi's granddaughter. Krishna has memories of the war: mostly dead bodies and funerals, she says. Peace, she says, has meant fewer deaths. "We had to keep moving before, but now it is safer and calmer because of samadanam," the little girl adds.

Krishna studies at Ramakrishna Missions Vidyalayam, a school situated just a few metres away from the kovil. "We have classes from year one to year 11, and I am in year eight," she informs us. She has five siblings, most of whom are married. She appears comfortable in her role as the 'little mother' and in her arms, Vishu's baby daughter Kanya, who stares suspiciously at us with her big eyes, seems quite content.

She wants to be a teacher. She wants to be able to help people and bring them out of their suffering. She believes education can do that. With the trouble brewing both in Colombo and the east, will her dreams be realised? The girl with the beautiful smile is one reason peace has to be given a chance.

- Sunday Leader, 08 AUG 2004

AIR SAVERS TRAVEL

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR FLIGHTS

Low season fares to Colombo from £365 + taxes, Madras £410 + taxes, Singapore £365 + taxes, Kuala lumpur £388 + taxes, Sydney £550 + taxes, Canada £210 + taxes.

FREE FLIGHT TO
Madras/Singapore/Kuala lumpur/Trichi/Trivendrum in Colombo Direct Flights

Economy Jaffna Flights available

We are handling agents for 15 airlines including British Airways, Gulf air, KLM, Air Canada etc.

IATA

4848 ATOL PROTECTED

236 Merton High Street
South Wimbledon,
London SW19 1AU

TUBE: South Wimbledon

South Wimbledon

TEL: 020 - 8540 2226
FAX: 020 - 8540 6131
MOBILE: 07961 401 260
E-mail: airsaverstvl@yahoo.co.uk

Major CREDIT CARDS Accepted for bookings

Visas to Madras, Australia available

MR C K KANTHASWAMI: 1923 - 2004

Leaving a legacy of excellence, fairness and decency

S.Ratnapragasan., Colombo 6

Mr. C. K. Kanthaswami who had been Principal of Kokuvil Hindu College during the period 1960 - 1971 passed away in Sydney, Australia on Wednesday the 21st of April, 2004. After a distinguished school career at Jaffna Hindu College, he entered University College, Colombo (the predecessor of University of Ceylon) where he specialized in Physics. He joined the staff of Kokuvil Hindu College in September, 1940. Mr. S. Nagalingam, one of the senior teachers who were travelling from Vannarponnai daily to the same school, shared his horse carriage with Mr. Kanthaswami. From the day he arrived in a horse-carriage in natty European attire in far - back 1940 and through the years when he arrived by push bicycle and later in his black Ford motor car in equally spruce national attire he had grown with the school.

He shepherded it from the background, smoothed the path for successive Principals and shared the load with them. His working life was devoted to education. He was a teacher par excellence. He was tutor and mentor to many students. He was generous and inspirational as a teacher and embodied the finest traditions of teaching and mentorship of both the East and the West. With his encyclopedic knowledge and incisive analytical powers he provided an academic environment for his pupils where learning was a pleasure.

He guided them with benevolence and care. Their achievements delighted him. His praise was wonderful reward for those who learned at his feet. He taught Chemistry and Physics but he taught a great deal more. Following a teaching session with him, one was drawn by genuine intellectual curiosity to explore further in the library - this was an incessant joyful experience. He enriched us in a way few others every did. As a teacher and guide he was simply great.

Mr. Kanthaswami was appointed Vice-Principal of the school in January, 1947. In the same year, he was placed on

a Grade I special post. He was the youngest teacher in the North to be placed on this grade. C. K. Kanthaswami was a wonderful personality and had a vision for Kokuvil Hindu College which no one could match.

He belongs to a generation which still reveres their old teachers whenever they accidentally accost them. Those venerable teachers are still addressed by us with that charming affix "Sir". Not that there is any expectation for that reverence but the students of those days continue that tradition out of a sense of genuine veneration, not deceit. Teachers in the past were scholars who believed in furthering their knowledge. The teacher-pupil relationship, which was based on the teacher's concern for the welfare of the student and the student's respect for the teacher has regrettably broken down in recent years.

When Principal V. Nagalingam died suddenly of a heart-attack in 1949, Kanthaswami was made acting Principal and in the natural course of events, he would have been made Principal and after a time the management offered it to him. He declined it as he felt that a growing school needed the services of a more mature person like S Handy Perinpanayagam to lead the school. He had an earlier spell of acting period when Principal Seenivasagam was on long medical leave in 1943, and later from April, 1960 when Mr. Perinbanayagam retired in March of that year.

Kokuvil remains grateful to Mr. C. K. Kanthaswami who in 1949 declined the Principalship and welcomed whole heartedly Mr. S. Handy Perinpanayagam as Principal of Kokuvil Hindu College. He was then content to be second in command and made life at Kokuvil smooth and easy for "Handy Master" who confessed later in July, 1971 that "his ten years at Kokuvil were fruitful largely because of the friendliness and goodwill that bound them together. Kanthaswami was living for Kokuvil Hindu College and he believed I would do likewise."

In a tribute to Mr. C. K. Kanthaswami in July, 1971 Mr. Handy Perinbanayagam wrote: "During my ten years at Kokuvil I found in Kanthaswami a loyal colleague and a devoted personal friend. Our relationship did not remain formal and official for long. Our personal problems, our philosophies of life, our homes were all themes for friendly converse without reserve or inhibition. My idea of a good school is one where there is sustained give and take between the school and the community whose needs it serves. That the state is now exercising total authority over education should not mean that this authority should also be totalitarian and that the state should ignore community sentiment and community concern."

Mr. Kanthaswami retired from service in 1971 and emigrated with his wife to Australia in 1989 and joined his son there. He passed away in that country on 21st April, 2004 in his 88th year. His last thought was about his family temple at Maathanai Kokuvil. Just a week before his demise he had telephoned to verify whether the temple had received his regular remittance.

In a teaching career spanning nearly three decades, he epitomized the very best traditions of the education service. He left a legacy of excellence, fairness and decency. Always sartorially elegant and eloquent in expression while possessed of a near puckish sense of humour, few can lay claim like Mr. Kanthaswami to have been so widely respected and loved while garnering such fierce loyalty from many colleagues who came to work with him in the course of his long teaching career.

He instilled into his students the art of thinking soberly and thereby solving problems be it in the classroom or outside in the field, office or home in a cool

unbiased rational manner - a capability this land needs badly at the present time. It is with such nostalgic memories I pay tribute to one of the finest teachers whom I had the honour to be taught as a pupil when studying at Kokuvil Hindu College. He taught me many things and amongst them were the need to be neat, methodical and to be efficient.

Ever a devoted family man, he leaves his wife and life companion Mahadevi. There was a truly blessed union. Their faithfulness and love towards each other was truly a thing which called for much admiration in a world full of decadent moral values. Their family consists of two sons, Dhayananthan and Vaheesan, and the three daughters, Shanthini, Abhirami and Geethanjali. He will be much-missed by us all and his past pupils shall continue to remember him with love, affection and a deep sense of gratitude.

May Lord Murugan grant Mrs. Kanthaswami and her five children the strength and solace at this hour of grief over the irreparable loss.

LEARNING RESOURCES CENTRE

Grateful old students of Kokuvil Hindu College living in various parts of the world have decided to pay tribute to the late Mr.C.K.Kanthaswami and his enormous contribution by way of setting up a modern Learning Resources Centre at the College premises. Recognising the long felt need for such a Centre, Old Students Associations of the College functioning in various countries are collectively engaged in funding a project to fulfill this need and erect a fitting memorial to the late Mr. C.K. Kanthaswami.

The Kokuvil Hindu College Old Students Association (UK) at its Annual General Meeting held on 14 August unanimously decided to take a leading role in this project. All those interested in contributing to this project are kindly requested to contact Mr.R.Rajamaheswaran (President) on 0208 723 4329 or Mr.S.Sriranjan (Co-ordinator) on 01494 718430.

NEWS TRACK

Insurance salesman shot dead: July 22 - An insurance salesman was shot dead by unidentified gunmen Thursday, 22 July, around 8.30 p.m. at Muthiraiyadi on the A5 highway, in Batticaloa. The dead man has been identified as Mr. Ravishankar, 28, who works as a field officer for the Union Assuarance insurance company. Mr. Ravishankar was returning to Batticaloa on his motorbike after meeting clients, relatives said. His family lives in Batticaloa town.

The gunmen might have mistaken the insurance salesman for an LTTE cadre, sources in the area said.

SLA admits to arrest of missing youth: July 22 - Sri Lanka's Attorney General (AG) Thursday informed the Jaffna High Court that Lt. Col. T. M Mahindarathne, a Sri Lanka army officer who is the first respondent in a habeas corpus application, has written to the AG's department acknowledging that he had indeed taken into custody Mr. Velupillai Uthayakumar on 17 June 1997 in Kodikamam, a town in the northern peninsula. Mr. Uthayakumar is among more than 600 Tamil persons who went missing after they were arrested by the Sri Lanka army in 1996-97.

Uthayakumar's father, Mr. Veluppillai along with the village officer of the area (J355), Mr. Thangamaylan and the principal of the Kodikamam Government Tamil Mixed School where Mr. Uthayakumar had studied for his GCE A.L, handed over him to Lt. Col. Mahindarathne who was the officer in charge of the Kodikamam SLA camp when they were informed that the military wanted to question the youth. The SLA at the Kodikamam camp issued a 'receipt of arrest' to the Mr. Uthayakumar's father acknowledging that it had taken the youth into custody on 17 June 1996. But later on the day the SLA had gone to Mr. Velupillai's home, threatened him and seized the receipt of arrest from him. Uthayakumar has been missing since then. Lt. Col. Mahindarathne received promotions since then and is now an officer at the Kankesanthurai Sri Lanka army base.

NECORD funds road rehabilitation in Jaffna: July 23 - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded North East Community Restoration Development (NECORD) is planning to fund rehabilitation of internal roads in two pradeshya sabha divisions in Jaffna district, local media in Jaffna reported.

Repairs for six inner county roads in Valigamam East Neervely and another six roads in Valigamam South Chunnakam will receive funding from NECORD, report said.

In Valigamam East, Atchuvely-Nachchmar Kovil road, Puthur Colony Plan Road, Irupalai Sports Ground Road, Irupalai Karuthollai Road, Puththur-Avarangal Market Road and Nilavarai Pillaiyar Temple Road are to be repaired under NECORD funding.

In Valigamam South, Thavady Cemetary Road, Sanguveli-Thampalai Road, Ilavalai-Ilukovil Road, Chunnakam-Maiyilani First Cross Street, Inuvil-Kumaralingam Road, and Inuvil-Kiluvan Kattai Road will be rehabilitated under the NECORD scheme.

Rural Planning Division has submitted the estimates for repairs to the Planning Division of the Jaffna Secretariat, reports added.

EPDP protests against Norway: July 23 - More than a hundred persons demonstrated in front of the Norwegian Embassy in Colombo Friday, 23 July. The demo was organised by the EPDP, to protest against the killing of one of its members in Akkaraipattu on the island's Southeastern coast on the previous day. The protestors brought the body of the dead cadre in a coffin and placed it in front of the Embassy building. The EPDP and its supporters blame the Norwegians for not doing enough to prevent killings of its members by the Tamil Tigers.

The Chairman of the Alayadivembu Pradeshiya Sabha in Akkaraipattu, Velaudan Ravindran alias Kamalan, was shot dead while he was engaged in a 'Sramadana' campaign on 21 July evening by a suspected LTTE's pistol gang member. Mr. Ravindran had been appointed as the PS Chairman after former Chairman Jegadeesh was allegedly killed by the LTTE about a year ago, according to EPDP sources.

LTTE cadre shot dead: July 23 - An LTTE cadre identified as Mr. Seenithamby Mahalingam, 28, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Kandaladi, near Vakarai, 64 kilometres north of Batticaloa.

Fears for journalist's safety: July 24 - "A dozen [Sri Lanka] police without a warrant searched the Colombo home of Dharmaretnam Sivaram, editor of the news website TamilNet for the second time in three months on 23 July," said Reporters Without Borders (RSF) in a press release. RSF deplored the post-midnight raid as unjustified and said it was worried about his safety. Mr. Sivaram was with two of his friends, Rajpal Abeynayake of the Sri Lanka Sunday Times and an MP for the eastern district of Batticaloa, Senathirajah Jeyanandamoorthy, when police arrived at the journalist's home. Despite having parliamentary immunity, Mr. Jeyanandamoorthy, MP, was searched, the press release added.

Another youth shot dead: July 24 - A youth was found shot dead on Saturday, 24 July, in Pandiruppu, 40 kilometres south of Batticaloa. Police identified the victim as Mr.Sithamparapillai Thushyanthan, 25, of Mandur, about 32 kilometers southwest of Batticaloa. His body was found around 8.30 am near the Pandiruppu cemetery. He was an employee of the Kalmunai branch of the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation.

TNA MP refused entry to India: A TNA parliamentarian who was on his way to attend a Tamil conference in Tamil Nadu was refused entry and deported on 24 July.

The MP, Kanahendran Eelavendan, accompanied by Upcountry People's Front leader P. Chandrasekaran left Colombo for the meeting, but was stopped at the Chennai airport and refused entry into the country.

Mr. Chandrasekaran, who was allowed to proceed from the airport, reportedly made an attempt to argue the case for his colleague, but failed to convince the authorities to allow Mr. Eelavendan to enter Tamil Nadu. Another TNA parliamentarian, Mr Mavai Senathiraja had also gone to Tamil Nadu earlier to attend the same conference.

Explaining the reasons why Mr. Eelavendan was turned away, party sources said he had been living as a refugee in Tamil Nadu for more than 15 years, but had been deported in December 4, 2000 after being accused of being a pro-LTTE activist.

He is learnt to have gone to Tamil Nadu without a visa, using the privilege given to MPs to travel visa-free to any SAARC country. Though the deportation caused a stir across the Palk Straits, an official of the Indian High Commission in Colombo claimed last night they were not aware of the happenings.

Helgesen meets Thamilselvan: July 26 - Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister, Vidar Helgesen, met with LTTE Head of Political Wing, S.P.Thamilchelvan, at the LTTE Political Head Quarters in Kilinochchi Monday, 26 July, for discussions on the stand of the LTTE regarding the recommencement of peace negotiations with the Government of Sri Lanka, according to the LTTE's peace secretariat website. Norwegian ambassador for Sri Lanka, Hans Brattskar and other officials from the Norwegian Embassy, participated in the meeting.

Mr. P. Nadesan, Head of the Tamil Eelam Police, Mr. S. Puleedevan, Secretary General of the Peace Secretariat, George and a woman official of the LTTE political wing, accompanied Mr.Thamilchelvan for the discussions.

Mr. Thamilchelvan told the Norwegian delegation that there was no change to the position of the LTTE from that conveyed by Mr.V.Pirapaharan to the Norwegian Foreign Minister Mr. Jan Petersen during their meeting in last May. Mr Thamilchelvan added that, "ISGA proposals should form the basis of the recommencement of negotiations," and pointed out that "serious lapses are taking place in Batticaloa, Amparai in the context of the CFA violation relating to the activities of armed groups," the website said.

After discussions with Mt Thamilselvan, Mr.Helgesen told reporters that the continuing violence did not make him hopeful for an early resumption of peace talks adding, "Before coming to Sri Lanka I was not particularly optimistic, and there is no progress to report from this particular meeting." "The ceasefire is being breached. That is pretty serious ... There is a risk that minor incidents can erupt into major incidents. That is why we are trying to caution both sides to redouble their efforts to continue the peace process," he said.

Nedumaran cautions against military pact: July 26 - The World Tamil Confederation at its sessions held in Bangalore, India cautioned the Union government that signing a military pact with Sri Lanka would result in serious consequences. Giving his presidential address at the second World Tamil Conference on 25 August, P Nedumaran said that Sri Lanka was bent upon having such a pact with India in its efforts to subvert the Tamil movement in that country and India should not fall a prey to it. He said efforts were being made to justify such a military pact between the country and Sri Lanka, citing similar pacts with Nepal and Bhutan. While these countries anticipated a threat from China, Sri Lanka had no such threat, he pointed out. Mr Nedumaran further said while countries like Malaysia stood with the nation during times of conflicts, Sri Lanka just tried to play a mediator's role and hence could not be considered a friend.

No direct funding to LTTE: July 26 - The World Bank has reassured Sri Lanka that it would not provide direct funding to the LTTE, despite news reports that it was preparing to implement its proposed development plans in the LTTE-controlled areas with the Tigers.A spokesman for the World Bank office in Colombo said they would continue to channel their funds through the Central government.

The controversy came after World Bank country director Peter Harrold met with LTTE's political head, Mr S P Tamilselvan and handed over a Tamil translation of the Country Assistance Strategy which includes projects to be introduced in the northern and eastern province. Following the meeting the LTTE's peace secretariat in a statement said that discussions took place between Harrold and the Head of LTTE's Political Wing, S.P. Thamilchelvan on removing "impediments in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the absence of the right mechanism".

But, on arrival in Colombo, the World Bank in a statement said Harrold had referred to the Tokyo declaration which states that 'assistance by the donor community will be closely linked to substantial and parallel progress in the peace process'.

Compensation for death in detention: Aug 27 - Recognising clearly that the Constitution guarantees the right to life the Supreme Court in an unprecedented judgment on 26 July awarded one million rupees to the wife of a prisoner who died after he was brutally assaulted by some officers of the Negombo prison in western Sri Lanka.

In this case 36-year-old Lama Hewage Lal, a resident of Seeduwa, had been arrested by Seeduwa Police on November 5, 2002 and had been produced before the Negombo Magistrate on November 6. He had been committed to the Negombo Remand Prison on the same day. Some of the prison officers of the Negombo prison had brutally assaulted the detainee, Lal, and he had died inside the prison as a result.

His wife, Rani Fernando, a mother of 3 minor children filed a fundamental rights application in the Supreme Court. After inquiring into the matter, the Supreme Court delivered its judgment holding that the Constitution of Sri Lanka recognized the right to life and ordering the State to pay compensation of Rs. 925,000/- to the wife and children and the Superintendent, the Chief jailor and the OIC of the Negombo prison to pay Rs. 25,000/- each, amounting to a total of rupees one million.

Jaffna Hospital Association website: July 27 - S.Sathurmugam, the Director Teaching Hospital, and Dr.Ambalavanar, president of Jaffna General Hospital Development Association (JGHDA) launched a website for JGHDA on 19 July, sources in Jaffna said. A message posted on the website said that the site is not the official website of the Hospital but of the JGHDA which is registered with the Sri Lanka government as a Non-Governmental Organization.

"he purpose of this website (www.jafhos.org) is to give an overview of the Association and its work. It also serves to highlight the hospital, its various departments and the services they provide for the Tamil community in the North in alleviating the suffering caused by trauma & illness.

"he website will also focus on the shortcomings and needs of the hospital. Many have expressed a desire to help the hospital in some way. The website will hopefully provide a way by which information could be obtained so that such help could be channelled appropriately," says a message on its home page.

JVP meets EU: July 27 - At a meeting with European Union country representative Mr Wouter Wilton on 26 July, Minister Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who led a JVP delegation, had reported said that the solution to the North-East problem should be

based on decentralisation of administrative powers while safeguarding the sovereignty of the country.

Referring to a statement made by Mr. Wilton that a settlement of the North-East conflict may not be possible by only holding talks with the LTTE and that they would like to view the problem with an open mind, Minister Dissanayake said that it was the LTTE that insisted parties to peace talks and the ceasefire agreement must be confined to the Government and the LTTE.. If that is the LTTE's stand the other side too should have an objective towards holding peace talks. Both sides should hold talks with a clear idea about its outcome.

Referring to foreign interventions for holding peace talks, the Minister had said that the JVP would welcome facilitation by foreign delegates, individuals or agencies to solve the North-East problem so long as the sovereignty of the country was preserved.

The Minister warned that any foreign intervention not acting in an independent manner and trying to force their own political agenda would be opposed by the JVP.

Helgesen meets SLMC leader: July 27 - Visiting Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister, Vidar Helgessan, pledged to take up the Muslim aspect of the peace process with the LTTE, according to the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress.

Rauf Hakeem, leader of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress in an interview with 'Dawn'soon after he met with the Norwegian deputy foreign minister on 27 August, said that he was assured of Norway's support to lobby for the rights of the Muslims in LTTE-controlled North East.

"This is the most successful round of talks we have had with the Norwegians. They have agreed to our proposal of Muslim representation in the event of peace talks resuming between the LTTE and the government," Mr Hakeem said referring to the earlier unsuccessful talks with the Norwegian peace facilitators regarding the rights of the north east Muslims.

The visiting Norwegian delegate had told the SLMC leader that the Karuna affair which has put the country on a war alert had become a stumbling block in taking forward the stalled peace talks between the government and the LTTE.

The Norwegian deputy foreign minister met with Rauff Hakeem as part of his talks with the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE in a bid to save the fragile ceasefire agreement. Mr. Hakim is reported to have told the Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister that his party would accommodate the LTTE's Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) proposal if SLMC political proposals also are included in it, according to SLMC sources.

EPDP objects to ISGA: July 28 – An EPDP delegation, which had discussions with Norwegian envoy, Vidar Helgesen on 26 July at the Norwegian Embassy, while expressing their fullest support for the continuation of the peace process and talks with the LTTE to establish true peace in the country, had expressed their strong opposition to the LTTE's proposal to establish an ISGA.

The EPDP leader, Douglas Devananda and other members reportedly told Mr Helgessen: "We could not agree to their main demands which states the institutionalising of the ISGA and accept them as the sole representative of the Tamils." EPDP had reportedly alleged that although both previous governments and the present government attempted to establish peace in the country it could not be fulfilled as the LTTE acted deceitfully to sabotage their attempts.

Although the LTTE maintained that the Karuna issue was merely an internal problem of the organization, the EPDP had said, "It has now gone beyond that threatening all democratic forces and parties. Hence, the government along with all democratic forces should get together to tackle the dispute between the LTTE and renegade leader Karuna."

LTTE opens Court complex in Mannar: July 28 - The court complex of the Thamileelam Mannar District Court was declared open Wednesday, 28 July, in Vattakandal in the Liberation Tigers controlled Vanni region by Mr.Pon Thiyagam, Head of the Thamileelam Martyrs Department who cut the ceremonial ribbon at the event. At the commencement of the event, Mr. Pedurupillai, father of the first woman LTTE martyr Lieutanant Malathi, and the mother of three martyrs Ms Pon Thiyagam lit the flame of sacrifice. Mr.S. Iniyavan, LTTE's political head of the Mannar district, unveiled the plaque of the new court building. Thamileelam Judiciary Head Mr.Pararajasingham and several leading LTTE activists and large number of residents of the area participated in the event.

Refugee influx unprecedented: July 28 – "'Hundreds of refugees are risking their lives, paying high fares to unscrupulous boatmen, to return from India to their homes in the northeast. The influx of refugees is increasing by the day. It is hence imperative that MPs of the Vanni District should persuade the governments of India and Sri Lanka to let these refugees return legally by ferry or by boats from Mannar," said the Government Agent for Mannar.

Speaking at the monthly advisory meeting on the De-centralised Budget allocation for the Vanni District at the Vavuniya District Secretariat, the Mannar GA, Mr. V. Wisvaingam, said the refugees undertake hazardous journeys at the mercy of the refugee smugglers who sometimes abandon the returnees on dangerous sandbanks at mid sea. "'Many refugees tell me that they had to pawn their valuables to pay the illegal boatmen," he said..

"Thousand two hundred and eighty five refugee families returned from India in five years from 1999 to 2003. But in the first six months of 2004 thousand five hundred families returned from from refugee camps in India to their homes in the northeast through Mannar," he said. Only ten families returned in the year 2000 when fighting was intense between Colombo and the Liberation Tigers, Mr. Wisvalingam said.

President meets Helgessen: July 28 - When she met Norway's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vidar Helgessen, President Chandrika Kumaratunga indicated her Government's willingness to commence negotiations with the LTTE based on the need for setting up an interim authority for the Northeast.

Mr. Helgessen briefed the President on his discussion with LTTE political wing leader S. P. Tamilselvan. Helgessen assured that the LTTE remained committed to the Ceasefire Agreement, but had noted that they (LTTE) was willing to come to the negotiating table only if the Government agreed to base talks on the LTTE's proposal for a Interim Self Governing Authority.

The President indicated to Mr. Helgessen that her Government was willing and keen to commence negotiations on an interim authority within the framework of a united Sri Lanka and to reach a durable solution to the conflict, the Presidential Secretariat said.

Reporter shot at in east: July 29 - A journalist belonging to the Tamil weekly *"Thinamurasu"* was shot at and injured in both his legs on Monday night, 26 July police said. The journalist, identified as 25-year old Sadacharalingam Kamaladas, who was hospitalised, stated that he saw two men in shorts storming into his home in Ariyampathi, Batticaloa district while he was seated in the verandah and shot at him. The LTTE has been accused of being responsible for the shooting. The Free Media Movement (FMM), condemned the shooting and injuring of journalist Sada Sangaralingam Kamaladasan. The FMM described the attack as an assault on the freedom of expression and right to life. The FMM press release issued by its spokesman Sunanda Deshapriya said: "Mr. Kamaladasan works as a provincial journalist for the weekly Tamil language newspaper, Thinamurasu. Thinamurasu newspaper distributors had been threatened several times during the last two years.

Govt ready to resume peace talks: July 29 - The government said that it is prepared to commence peace talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at any time and anywhere. Speaking at the post Cabinet press briefing Media Minister Mr. Mangala Samaraweera said that the LTTE should adopt a policy of flexibility in its stand. In reply to a question Cabinet Spokesman Mr. Mangala Samaraweera said government has accepted its responsibility and the need to resume the peace talks in the inter-

est of the country. He appealed to the LTTE to extend its co-operation to put a stop to the killings in the northeast and the south.

Sri Lanka's President Ms Chandrika Kumaratunge had on the previous day told the visiting Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Vidar Helgessen during a lengthy meeting at President's House that her government was willing and keen to resume negotiations with the LTTE on an interim authority within the frame work of a united Sri Lanka and to reach a durable solution to the ethnic conflict, according to Presidential Secretariat media release. Ms Chandrika Kumaratunge reiterated the Government's commitment to the ceasefire agreement and expressed hope that the LTTE would agree to resume talks on the basis outlined by her, the media release added.

Another 'Karuna' associate shot dead: July 30 - A person identified as an associate the former LTTE commander V. Muralitharan alias Karuna, was shot dead on 30 July in the general area of Welikanda, 70 kilometres northwest of Batticaloa.

Police said the dead man was identified as Mr. Sivanayakam Pushpakumar, 20, of Muththukkal, an ancient Tamil village in the district of Polannaruwa. A placard found on the body of Pushmakumar stated that he had been executed for being a 'traitor'.

Karuna loyalist remanded: July 31 - Sri Lanka army in Batticaloa arrested a youth with a 9 mm pistol in his possession who is suspected as a loyalist of former LTTE commander 'Karuna'. The SLA arrested him when he attempted to pass through a military check post at the Uppodai entry point to the LTTE held hinterland of the eastern district. The arrested youth was identified as Mr. Gunasekeram Supendran, 20, of Palacholai, Vantharumoolai, north of Batticaloa, was produced before the Batticaloa magistrate who remanded him until 13 August.

PLOTE Mohan shot dead in Colombo: July 31 - Kandaiah Yogarajah of Central Camp on the Batticaloa Ampara border, also known as 'PLOTE Mohan' was shot dead Saturday around 12.15 p.m. by unidentified gunmen in the heart of Colombo

The victim was travelling in an auto rickshaw on Duplication Road in Bambalapitiya, a busy suburb of Colombo, when gunmen allegedly belonging to the LTTE riding motorbikes had fired on him. Though Mohan has been described as was a key military intelligence informant, the Sri Lankan Army authorities have denied that he was in any working for them.

Two arrested by LTTE: Aug 1 - Liberation Tigers claimed that they arrested two persons allegedly working with the Sri Lankan military intelligence in Periyapullumalai on the A-5 highway in Batticaloa, close to the Amparai District border.

"We recovered two T-56 assault rifles and mobile phones from them. We also arrested a collaborator identified as Gunabanda Sinnavan, 38, with a Self Loading Rifle", an LTTE official is quoted as having said. He identified the persons accused of working with the Sri Lankan military intelligence as Mr. Arumugam Ravichandran, 30 and Mr. Sellathurai Santhirasekeram, 27 of Iluppadichenai in Karadiyanaaru, northwest of Batticaloa.

Child Protection Unit opened: Aug 1 - The office of the Child Protection Unit (CPU) of the Batticaloa District Child Protection Committee (DCPC) was declared open on 1 August at the Teaching Hospital in Batticaloa town by the Government Agent Mr.V.Shanmugam, according to UNICEF sources.

UNICEF supported the establishment of the office, including the purchase of a computer and three-wheeler and other office equipment. The UN children's agency is also supporting the DCPC to build safer, child friendly communities through the implementation of awareness and training programmes on child rights and the prevention of child abuse

Through its activities, the DCPC will serve as an active reminder that child protection is everybody's responsibility and encourage both adults and children to create an environment at home, in schools and in the community, where children are protected and given the best chances to develop to their full potential, UNICEF sources further said.

LTTE's Human Rights Group meets: Aug 1 - Northeast Secretariat of Human Rights (NESOHR), formed on the 9 July to monitor the human rights violations and implement actions to strengthen the human rights in the NorthEast, held its second meeting on Sunday, 1 August, with Head of LTTE Political Wing, S.P.Thamilchelvan attending, to finalize NESOHR' charter, LTTE's Peace Secretariat website said.

Fr.M.X. Karunaratnam, Head of the Action Committee for NESOHR, opening the meeting said that International Human Rights groups have shown a lot of interest in understanding the functioning of NESOHR. Fr.Kunaratnam said that Mr. Nadesan, the Head of LTTE's Police Department, and Mr. Para, the Head of Judiciary of the LTTE, had also met NESOHR separately to discuss how they could assist NESOHR in carrying out its functions effectively.

Elections for executive committee members was held and the following were elected: Chairperson: Fr. Karunaratnam, Vice Chairperson: Mr. Sivapalan, Secretary: N. Malathy, and Treasurer: Gajendran. Ms. Diedre McConnel then gave a presentation on the Human Rights instruments of the United Nations, the report said.

Seven Tigers remanded: Aug 2 - The magistrate of Akkaraipattu in eastern Sri Lanka remanded seven Tigers of the LTTE and three others until 13 August when Police produced the ten at his residence. Police said Special Task Force commandos arrested the group after two T- 56 rifle rounds and two vials of cyanide were found in the bag of an LTTE cadre. Police said the two cartridges were found in the bag when the group which was travelling in a van was stopped by the commandos at STF camp in what was formerly the Akkaraipattu Base Hospital.

Explosion at checkpoint: Aug 2 - A Police constable, two homeguards and a lorry driver received minor shrapnel wounds when a grenade lobbed by unidentified persons near a Sri Lanka military checkpoint at Sevanapitiya on the Batticaloa-Polannaruwa road exploded on 1 August Sunday night around 8.30 p.m. The lorry was damaged in the explosion. The vehicle was carrying bags of rice from Kalmunai to Colombo, Police said.

Grenade explodes in Valaichenai: Aug 2 - Two men riding a motorbike lobbed a grenade on the road in Valaichenai town, 32 kilometres north of Batticaloa, around 11.15 am Monday on 2 August. The grenade which exploded near the Valaichenai post office caused little damage. "This looks like an attempt to create fear in the town", a Police officer in the area said.

UNHCR urged to organize boat service: Aug 2 - Mr.Selvam Adaikalanathan, Vanni district Tamil National Alliance (TNA) parliamentarian has appealed to the UNHCR Sri Lanka's Representative to take steps to organize boat service between India and Talaimannar to transport Sri Lankan Tamil refugees who are willing to return to their villages. Currently thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees are in refugee camps in Tamilnadu in South India.

Mr.Adaikalanathan made this appeal in a letter sent to the UNHCR following complaints that Tamil refugees from Tamilnadu frequently return to Mannar by sea illegally, risking their lives. Indian boatmen charge 1000 to 7500 Indian rupees from a refugee to cross the 18 km. stretch of sea between Thanuskody and Tamalaimannar.

Five injured in attack on EPDP office: Aug 3 - Five persons, including a Police constable, were wounded in a rifle grenade attack on the office of the EPDP in Valaichenai, 32 kilometres north of Batticaloa, on Tuesday, 3 August, around 7.45, Police said. The EPDP office is situated near the Sri Lanka army camp at the Valaichenai fisheries harbour. The local EPDP leader 'Siva' (Anpunan Kandasamy) was also wounded when a rifle launched grenade hit the EPDP office, Police said.

Police said the attackers had fired an M-203 type rifle grenade and another from a Toucan type single grenade launcher. One missed the EPDP camp and fell in a compound nearby, Police said. The wounded paramilitary cadres were rushed to Valaichenai hospital and later transferred to Batticaloa. The EPDP has accused the LTTE for the attack.

Muslim massacre marked: Aug 3 - Muslim populated towns in the Batticaloa Ampara area in eastern Sri Lanka observed a hartal (a general shut down) on 3 August to mark the 14th anniversary of the killing of 103 Muslims in the Meera Maakham Mosque in Kattankudy. A senior police spokesman in the eastern province said that day-to-day life in Muttur and Kinniya were completely paralysed due to the hartal. "School, government and private offices were shutdown and transport service halted during the day", he said. In 1990, LTTE cadres gunned down 103 Muslims in a Mosque in Kathankudi when they were observing prayers. MPs of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress wore black arm-bands to Parliament to mark the mass killing.

A pamphlet distributed by the Federation of North-East Muslim Brotherhood said the objective of the protests was to bring to the notice of the world LTTE's 'heinous crimes' against Muslims.

Army ready to meet LTTE areas: Aug 4 - The Army has told the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission to arrange regular district level meetings with the LTTE either in Batticaloa or even in uncleared areas. This is because the LTTE intimated to the SLMM that they were not in a position to meet the army in Batticaloa due to threats from the Karuna faction, a news report from stated.

Man with 'Karuna link' killed: Aug 4 - Mr.Kiruparatnam Vimalethiran, 32, a married man with a son believed to have links with the 'Karuna Group' was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Mavadivembu, 22 kilometres north of Batticaloa on August 3, Tuesday night. Mavadivembu residents who knew him said he was formerly an LTTE member and that Tigers had expelled him for misconduct many years ago. He worked as a labourer in rice mill after his expulsion from the LTTE. It is alleged that he was killed by the LTTE because he was suspected of having secret links with the Karuna Group.

Grenade attack on EPDP office: Aug 4 - Four Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) members and a Police Constable were injured as the EPDP office in Valachchenai came under hand grenade attack around 7.30 on 3 August, military sources said. According to initial investigations, two unidentified men had come on a motorcycle and had carried out this attack. Suspected to be from LTTE, they had thrown the hand grenade into the EPDP office.

The four injured persons and the Police Constable were admitted to Valachchenai hospital. Kandan Candiah alias Shiva the provincial EPDP leader who contested the last general election on the EPDP list was seriously injured in the incident. He is now undergoing treatment at Valachchenai hospital.

ISGA or separate state: Aug 4 – "There is increasing evidence that the Sri Lanka Government is unwilling to accept Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) for NorthEast. If this situation is not reversed soon, Tamil people will have no option other than to seek a path of secession," said Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP, M.K.Sivajilingam, during a debate in Parliament on 4 August.

"Despite changes in parties that form Sri Lanka Government, the ruling governments have been consistently ignoring the aspirations of the Tamil people. The Liberation Tigers, last October submitted a proposal for an ISGA, as a fundamental instrument to provide the Tamils with sufficient powers to rule themselves. Peace talks have not resumed based on the ISGA. Tamil people are increasingly doubtful of the sincerity of the Sri Lanka Government in advancing the peace talks towards an equitable solution. I have no doubt that the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) will be seen by future generations of Tamils as the main party that led to secession," Mr Sivajilingam said.

CBK resigns as head of ruling coalition: Aug 5 - Sri Lanka's President Chandrika Kumaratunga resigned her post as the leader of the ruling United People's Freedom Alliance on Wednesday, 4 August. The President's office said in brief statement that she was resigning due to pressure of work. The statement from the President's office said the Sri Lanka Freedom Party would decide on a new person to fill the vacancy.

Informed sources said the rationale behind the Presidential move follows closely with the opposition criticism of a conflict of interest, that she would face in handling the peace process as both President and the Leader of the UPFA. They said this move would allow her time and space to deal with the peace process as President of the country especially before the international community as opposed to leading a different role as Leader of the UPFA. Party sources also claimed the move might be linked to the recent dissension between the President and the JVP over reaching an agreement on the ISGA proposals.

Youth tortured in police station: Aug 5 - The Jaffna regional office of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) has determined after an inquiry that the fundamental human rights of Mr.Gajendran (20) was violated by the Police when he was detained in the Jaffna police station for investigation on 17 March this year. The matter has been forwarded to the head quarters of the HRCSL for necessary legal action against the errant police officers.

The Jaffna regional office of the HRCSL has informed the National Police Commission (NPC) and the Inspector General of Police (IGP) of the finding for necessary action.

According to Jaffna regional office of the HRCSL, Gajendran was allegedly tortured by police personnel led by a sub-inspector when he was held at the Jaffna police station for inquiry.

LTTE return under age youth: Aug 5 - The Liberation Tigers in Batticaloa handed over to parents fifteen underage youth who had come to join them at a function held on 5 August at Karadiyanaaru, 22 kilometres northwest of Batticaloa. "'We checked the identities and birth certificates after they came to join us. We are handing back the young persons who were found to be underage to their parents today," according to a report in TamilNet quoting Mr. S. Manoj, LTTE.s media coordinator in Batticaloa.

"Patience running thin": Aug 5 – "Tamil people are fast running out of patience. It has been three years since the ceasefire agreement was signed and our people continue to be denied the fruits of peace," Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam, Tamil National Alliance MP told TamilNet on 5 August.

"It has been several months since the ISGA proposals have been put forward but the Sinhala leadership collectively still is unable to get their act together and start meaningful talks. As far as we Tamils are concerned it is the Sinhala leadership as a whole that must accept full responsibility for this most unsatisfactory state of affairs. Internal political rivalry from within the Sinhala political establishment can no longer be sited as an excuse. It is the Sinhala political establishment as a whole that is to be blamed," he said.

He further said, "The present constitution cannot be cited as an obstacle to starting talks and reaching an agreement on the ISGA proposals. No one can expect an interim administration to be within the present constitution. It is the consecutive constitutions that have brought about the ethnic conflict to where it is today. When we are trying to find a solution, to expect us to confine ourselves to a constitution that is in fact the problem, is downright stupid," Mr.Ponnambalam said.

English learning room: Aug 6 – 'Lighthouse Resource Room' providing learning facilities to students in the Trincomalee education zone to enhance their knowledge in English language was declared opened in Trincomalee Methodist Girls' College on 5 August by Mr.G.Gunatilake, Director of Navodhya Education Project in the central government. Under the Navodhya education project each education zone in the island is provided with

'Lighthouse Resource Room'. Trincomalee Methodist Girls' College was selected by the Government for the Trincomalee education zone.

LTTE's special RPG Force units: Aug 6 – "Liberation Tigers were the first to use Rocket Propelled Grenade launchers (RPG) in the island. Sri Lankan armed forces obtained RPGs after they saw us using the launchers in battles. I created the LTTE's RPG force when I realised that armour was going to be a key component of Op. Jeya Sikurui. Our RPG units were very successful in fighting enemy armour'", said Mr. Velupillai Pirapaharan, leader of the LTTE, addressing the passing out of Special RPG Force units at the Tigers' Military Training College in the Vanni on Friday, 6 August.

Sri Lankan army's biggest operation was Jeya Sikurui (Sure Victory). It was aimed at capturing LTTE's strategic heartland in the Vanni. They deployed unprecedented armour to push swiftly into frontine Tiger strongholds in the Vanni. The initial speed acheived by Sri Lankan armour slowed down to a crawl after it met fierce and sustained resistance from LTTE tank killer squads in the Vanni forests.

EPDP cadre killed: Aug 7 - A person identified by the name, 'Haran' and believed to be a member of the EPDP was shot dead in Kaluthavalai in eastern Batticaloa around 11.15 a.m. on 6 August. The gunen who came on a motorbike got away, according to the police. The EPDP has accused the LTTE of carrying out the murder.

Defendants in explosives case get bail: Aug 7 - Jaffna Additional Magistrate Ms Srinithi Nandasekaran enlarged on surety bail all the four men, described as fishermen, accused for transporting explosives by sea to Jaffna town. They were kept in remand since their arrest on the orders of Jaffna Magistrate..

It is said that soldiers arrested the four fishermen of Gurunagar at the checkpoint located in the Cey-Nor Jetty allegedly in possession of dangerous explosives weighing about one kg.of TNT. The Jaffna Police charged the suspects under the Dangerous Explosive Ordinance under which only the Court of Appeal has jurisdiction to enlarge the suspects on bail, legal sources said. Judge Nandasekaran commenced inquiry into the case 6 August under the ordinary explosive ordinance rejecting the plaint filed by the Police under the Dangerous Explosive ordinance, legal sources said. She ordered each accused to furnish bail in a sum of Rs 25,000/= with two sureties and to report to the Jaffna Police every Sunday.

Another killing: Aug 7 - A civilian, suspected to be a supporter of the Karuna faction was shot dead around 7.30 am on 6 August while he was at Mutugala, Welikanda, according to military sources. said yesterday. According to initial reports, Poovapillai Alidaran, the victim was proceeding towards his paddy field when he was shot at close range by suspected LTTE men.

Two shot in Mannar: Aug 7 - Meanwhile, in another incident in Mannar two civilians were injured in a shooting incident in the early hours on 6 August as they were shot at close range by two unidentified gunmen suspected to be from LTTE while at their home. The two victims identified as Dharmalingam Murali, a tailor by profession and Seigu Ravindran, a fisherman at Kovilady, Murunkan in Mannar were admitted to Mannar Base hospital with serious injuries. They have been shot at close range by using a 9 mm pistol, Police said. According to initial investigations the two victims from the same family had refused to present at the LTTE office at Pesalai despite the LTTE orders for them to be present attend their office.

Rsidents sight 3 LTTE aircraft: Aug 7 - The LTTE has flown

wo small aircraft and a medium size aircraft, from Iranamadu, according to intelligence reports. It is said that residents in Eliranpuram, Pudukudiyiruppu and Meerukandi in north-eastern Sri Lanka had repeatedly sighted the two Cessna Sky Masters being flown overhead for several months.

Information received says that these two planes are flown from 4 a.m to 7 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 7 p.m for about 45 minutes each day. The medium sizeed 12-passenger plane has been acquired by the LTTE only recently and during the past three months it has flown only three short flights in the night.

Intelligence services have received information to the effect that two runways at the Tiger air force camp at Iranamadu have been repaired to enable planes to take off. These places were earlier bombed by the Sri Lanka Air Force several years back.

Security intelligence units say that they have informed the Sri Lanka Air Force, Defence Ministry and the Army Headquarters about the runways and the three aircraft.

Duty free cars for LTTE: Aug 9 - Following a decision taken by the Government the Government peace secretariat has informed the LTTE that the request for duty concessions on the purchase of four vehicles for the exclusive use of the LTTE peace Secretariat has been approved.

Issuing a statement the Government Peace Secretariat said today "this decision has been taken as a gesture to encourage the LTTE in its peace-building efforts and to strengthen the peace process as we jointly seek a permanent solution to the conflict within a united Sri Lanka". "Similar concessions have been provided on a discretionary basis to several bodies engaged in peace related activities in the North and East", the statement added.

Peace Secretary visits Jaffna Aug 9 - Dr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Secretary General of the government's peace secretariat, said that the second largest number cease fire violations occured in Jaffna. He appealed to the Sri Lanka army and the Liberation Tigers to reduce the number of violations by sticking to the provisions of the ceasefire agreement. He was speaking to the local press in Jaffna town during a fact-finding mission to the northern peninsula on Monday, 9 August.

Dr. Dhanapala met the Jaffna Government Agent, Sri Lanka army commanders, cease fire monitors and the Vice Chancellor of the Jaffna University.

Addressing members of the Consortium of Jaffna District Non-Governmental Organizations, Dr. Jayantha Dhanapala said, "The Sri Lankan Government is also preparing a draft interim proposal like the Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Peace talks between the GOSL and LTTE could commence on the basis of the proposals by the parties concerned,"

He further said President Ms Chandrika Kumaratunge is very keen in recommencing the stalled peace talks between the GOSL and LTTE.

Consortium Chairman Mr.S.Sakthivel presided over the discussion. Brigadier Sanath Karunaratne of the Sri Lanka Army who is designated Director, Operations, Rev.Fr.Bernard, Senior Vice President of the Ceylon Tamil Teachers Union (CTTU) Mr.T.Panchalingam and several others attended the discussion.

Two Karuna loyalists killed: Aug 9 - Suspected LTTE cadres in two separate attacks reportedly killed two Karuna supporters at Kalawanchikudi and Eravur on Saturday, 7 August. Nandakumaran Velupuillai (32) was shot dead at the Kaludawali bus stand. Police said the victim who was a resident of Vavuniya was shot in the head with a 3.8 mm pistol. A poster which read "The death penalty for enemies of the LTTE" was found near his body.

At Eravur 15 suspected LTTE cadres stormed a house and shot dead a woman occupant Chelliah Wikran (52), a mother of three. Eravur police Inspector Dharmasiri Ratnayake said one of the sons of the victim had reportedly defected and joined Karuna.

Police rescue Karuna loyalists: Aug 10 - Police commandos rescued three Karuna loyalists from their would-be-assassins in the Akkaraipattu police area on 9 August. Acting on a tip off, commandos intercepeted a vehicle carrying the Karuna cadres identified as Vigneswaran, Nimalan and Sudahar. "We also arrested two LTTE cadres responsible for the abduction. They had forced the three ex-LTTE cadres to get into the vehicle," a senior security official said. The vehicle had been escorted by an LTTE cadre riding a motor cylee.

Initial investigations revealed that the Karuna loyalists had been working as masons at a building site in the Kolavil area. "They had not been engaged in any clandestine activity," the official said. The arrested LTTE cadres had entered the Government held area on the pretext of carrying out political work. Scandinavian truce monitors have been informed of the incident.

Anthrax attack fear shuts US Embassy: Aug. 10 - The U.S. Embassy in Colombo was closed on Tuesday, 10 August for "security reasons" and staff were asked to leave the office and not return until further notice, an embassy spokesman and an embassy employee said. The spokesman said the closure was due to "security and administrative reasons."

The employee said an internal e-mail message was circulated soon after the embassy opened for the day saying that a "threatening letter" was received in the ambassador's office and that a secretary who opened it observed some powder. Fear of a possible anthrax attack made the embassy close the third and fourth floors of the building as well as the mailroom but the mission continued to work until afternoon when an order was issued to close the building, the employee said. "We were told that the order has come from Washington," the employee said.

EPDP member shot dead in Trinco: Aug 10 - Unidentified gunman shot dead a member of the EPDP in the heart of Trincomale town, around 9.30 pm. on Tuesday, 10 August, police in the eastern port town said. A senior EPDP member Asmalingam Ramani (49), a father of two children, was shot dead with two .38 calibre pistols outside his residence by two assailants who had been waiting in ambush for him. Over 25 gunshot injuries were found on his body According to police sources the victim had earlier received death threats from the LTTE.

Killings escalate in Batticaloa: Aug 12 - A person beleived to be linked to 'Karuna Group' was shot dead Tuesday around 7.20 pm on 10 August in Kaluwaanchikudy south of Batticaloa. The victim has been identified as Mr. Seniththamby Yogarajan of Central Camp on the border between the Batticaloa and Amparai districts.

Unidentified gunmen shot dead a person suspected to be linked to former LTTE commander Karuna in the early hours of the morning on Wednesday, 11 August, around 1.30 am in Kiran, in Batticaloa. He was riding a motorbike when the gunmen ambushed him at Kiran junction, Police said. The victim in this case has been identified as Sivrajah Sivaseelan, 28, manager of the Kiran Multi Pupose Cooperative Society, alleged to be a Karuna supporter. The gunmen took away victim's motorbike, according to Valaichenai Police investigating the killing.

Police assault protesting Bata workers: Aug 12 - Twenty Bata workers were injured in Colombo when Sri Lanka Police assaulted them severely to break up a fifty two day long protest against the international footwear giant for sacking the six hundred strong workforce at its factory in Ratmalana, an industrial area on the southern outskirts of Colombo. Police refused to record their complaint about the assault, workers said. Hundreds of Policemen attacked male and female workers who were demonstrating in front of the Bata factory on 12 August.

The entire Bata factory workforce went on strike after the company sacked a trade union leader who had questioned its decision to lay off 146 workers in June this year.

Workers now allege that Bata is using its immense political and financial power to break up their protest with the aid of the Police. They also allege that Bata has used its influence to prevent news about the protest from appearing in the mainstream media.

Govt protests LTTE build up: Aug 12 - The Sri Lankan government said that it had lodged a complaint with the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission overseeing the cease-fire about an alleged build up of Tamil Tiger rebel military installations around the strategic port city of Trincomalee in eastern Sri Lanka. The concerns follow a spate of attacks in eastern Sri Lanka - that have killed scores since a renegade rebel leader and 6,000 of his supporters made an unprecedented split from the mainstream group in March. "The government alleges that there are 13 camps around this (harbor) area," said Hagrup Haukland, the truce monitors' deputy chief. "We are in the process of checking it out."

Tortured and shot dead: Aug 14 - Two unidentified men were found shot dead at a lonely spot at Kiran in Eravur, 27 kilometres off Batticaloa on Thursday around 11.30 pm on 12 August, police said. Eravur Inspector Dharmasena Ratnayake said he believed the victims might have been abducted some time ago and tortured before being brought to this spot and shot dead. He said six spent .38 bullets were found near the victims who were each about 5 feet 6 inches in height and clad in shirt and sarong. Police suspect that the victims belonged to the Karuna faction of the LTTE. The bodies are lying at the Batticaloa hospital for identification.

Landmine kills 4 LTTE Wanni cadres: Aug 14 - At least four senior members of the LTTE Wanni faction were reportedly killed, when a landmine exploded under their vehicle in an uncleared area in Kokkadicholai on Thursday, 12 August. Military sources said that they had no official information about the incident and were waiting for confirmation. Karuna's loyalists had reportedly planted the mine targetting the Wanni cadres.

Tiger suspect remanded: Aug 14 - According to police sources, Kandaswamy Karan arrested by troops on Wednesday, 11 August, was a member of an LTTE gang responsible for the abduction and killing of a 25-year-old youth at Chenkalady several hours earlier. They said the youth was taken from his home at 9 pm on Tuesday, 10 August. "Troops found his body around 2 am the following day," an official said.

Karan was taken into custody when he was on his way to the Tiger territory on a motor cycle ridden by Kanapathypillai Surendran believed to be an undercover LTTE operative. "Surendran is the owner of the motor cycle. We have no doubt he was involved in Tuesday's killing and several previous assassinations in the area," he said. Surendran is also involved in the recent killing of an old woman whose son deserted the LTTE with Karuna. Police had reported that the rider was unarmed but the pillion rider carried a T-56 assault rifle, two hand grenades, 113 rounds of ammunition and two magazines. They were arrested at Mavadivembu. The army had handed over the suspects to the Eravur police. However Surendran had been released as he wasn't armed at the time of the arrest. But Karan had been remanded till August 26.

Institutionalise ISGA – LTTE: Aug 14 - Institutionalising the Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) proposals put forward by the Liberation Tigers must be viewed on a humanitarian perspective rather than making it a political bargain to satisfy extremist elements in the southern polity, Mr.S.P.Thamilchelvan, the head of the LTTE's political wing told Norwegian Deputy Ambassador at a meeting held in Kilinochchi on Saturday, 14 August.. "We are waiting for a positive response from the government to recommence negotiations on the basis of ISGA proposals," Mr. Thamilchelvan told the Norwegian diplomat,. LTTE's peace secretariat website reported.

The meeting between the Norwegian Deputy Ambassador Mr. Oddvar Lægreid and Mr.Thamilchelvan, Head of the LTTE Political Wing was described as a 'fact-finding' exercise intended to ascertain as to how best the facilitators could meaningfully act in the reactivation of the stalled peace process, the website reported.

"On the basis of the ISGA proposals submitted by us in October last and our unambiguous declarations made from time to time we are ready to recommence negotiations with the government and are only waiting for a positive response to that effect from the government through the facilitators," said Mr. Tamilselvan in response to the Norwegian Deputy Ambassador's concern relating to the delay, according to the report.

More killings in the east: Aug 15 - Violence in the East between the LTTE and the Karuna faction continues unabated according to the police. On 14 August, Saturday night, an unidentified person was shot dead near the EPDP office at Valachchenai by suspected LTTE cadres with a T 56 rifle. OIC Valachchenai police, R.K. Dharmawardena said the victim was five feet five inches in height, clad in sarong and shirt with hair cut short. His body was spattered with gunshots. Fifteen spent cartridges were found at the venue. Police believe he had been abducted earlier and brought there to be shot dead.

At Kokaddicholai in LTTE held area, four LTTE cadres were shot dead by suspected Karuna supporters. They were returning after having dropped LTTE Amparai leader, Ramesh when they were attacked. The police speculated that the assailants would have been under the impression that Ramesh was still in the vehicle.

Tigers install radar and satellite system: Aug 15 - Security sources said that there is information to the effect that the LTTE had installed a radar system and a satellite telephone centre in the sea coast between Sudakudan and Kichiliyan in the Muttur police area. Both Sudakudan and Kechiliyan are under LTTE control.

It is understood that the Radar system will be used to observe the movement of navy crafts and the satellite telephone centre will be used to obtain information required by LTTE leaders regarding the situation in the east. The radar system and the satellite centre will be under the control of Amudam, a LTTE Sea Tiger leader in Trincomalee. Trincomalee security sources said that a centre for training Tiger intelligence cadres has been established in the LTTE controlled Thawarakulam in Trincomalee. Intelligence sources said that 15 cadres are undergoing training in this camp under Tiger Intelligence Unit leader Seran.

Trincomalee gets separate High Court: Aug 15 - Mr.Anton Balasingham, currently Trincomalee District Judge, has been promoted as the first Judge of the newly established High Court of Trincomalee district. He is to preside over the inaugural sitting of the Trincomalee High Court Monday, 16 August, according to local sources.

Judge Balasingham joined the judicial service as a primary judge in 1983. He served as Additional Magistrate and Magistrate in Batticaloa, Mullaitivu and Jaffna. He was first appointed District Judge in Kalmunai. He was transferred to Trincomalee in the same capacity in 1994 till he was promoted High Court Judge last month.

The President of Sri Lanka appointed Mr.Anton Balasingham as High Court Judge on July 14th. He was sworn in as HC Judge before the Chief Justice on August 10.

Till recently, there was one Court, the Eastern High Court with the one High Court Judge covering the districts of Batticaloa and Trincomalee on a circuit basis. From Monday, districts of Batticaloa and Trincomalee will have separate High Courts with separate judges. With the establishment of a High Court in Trincomalee, eastern province will have three High Courts, in Amparai, Batticaloa and Trincomalee with separate judges.

Senior EPDP leader shot dead in Colombo: Aug 16 - Mr. Balanadarajah Iyer (also known as EROS Bala, or Sinna Bala), a senior leader and Propaganda Secretary of the EPDP was shot dead in Colombo by unidentified gunmen around 8.15 am on Monday 16 August. Mr. Iyer, also a well known writer and journalist, has been one of the main contributors to the Tamil weekly, 'Thinamurasu'.

Mr Iyer, a veteran activist and leader of the Tamil militant movement from the 1970s was formerly a high ranking member

of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS), the leader of which, Mr V Balakumar, later joined the Tamil Tigers and has now become one their leading figures

Mr. Iyer worked for the Liberation Tigers for five years after EROS became largely defunct in 1990.

On the day of his assassination, two gunmen waited near his home in Pamankada, Wellawatte in Colombo and shot him dead hitting him several times at close range as he emerged out of his home on to the road.

Tellipalai cancer hospital to reopen: Aug 16 - The abandoned Cancer Hospital in Tellipalai, which is located in the Palaly high security zone in Jaffna district, is likely to be reopened and become operationally functional with effect from 15 September this year when the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) is to hand over a set of renovated buildings of the hospital to the Provincial Health Ministry, according to hospital development sources.

The renovated buildings to be handed over include Out Patients Department, wards for patients and quarters for medical officers.

The SLA authorities have promised health ministry that it would assist hospital employees and medical officers to go to cancer hospital through army checkpoint with minimum checks, according to Dr.E.Theivendran, representative of the Tellipalai cancer hospital development committee.

LTTE bars Muslims: Aug 19 - LTTE has warned a large number of Muslim civilians who cleared a land area to resettle in Muttur in the eastern Trincomalee district, not to resettle in the area, according to army sources. The LTTE cadres have warned the Muslim civilians of 'dire consequences' in the event they do ignore the LTTE warning and resettle in those areas.

"These Muslims were planning to re-settle in a deserted area after clearing the land when some LTTE cadres approached those Muslims and warned them to refrain from doing so. They had also told the civilians to first obtain permission by the LTTE Trincomalee leader Elialan, to even visit that area, army said. The Muslim civilians have complained to the Trincomalee police and the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission.

(continued from page 19)

a compromise with the Tamil nation, led by the LTTE at present, is to their long-term advantage in the sense of development, progress and welfare of their own constituencies. Kumaratunga should also convince the JVP that it can easily improve its chances at future elections by being a partner, an agent and even a co-leader in brining negotiated peace to Sri Lanka. As the President may tell her juniors in the coalition, no party in Sri Lanka's South today needs to retain the outdated Sinhalese nationalist baggage of the 1960s and 1970s to win elections. The electorate has advanced quite a lot in their political consciousness. This would be a perfectly ethical exercise in political conversion!

Interestingly, in this two-track dialogue, the success with the JVP is an essential pre-condition for success in the dialogue with the LTTE. The reason is simple. It is about social bases of politics and preparing class forces for a major shift in the way political power in Sri Lanka is organized at present. No meaningful compromise with the LTTE will be possible, interim or otherwise, without re-organizing Sri Lanka's present state structure. No such initiative can be put into practice without class and political forces backing the political leadership who will undertake that historical task. ❑

JVP campaign against ISGA: Aug 19 - The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), major constituent of the ruling minority United Peoples Freedom Alliance (UPFA) government has been actively engaged in a campaign in the south of the country against the Interim Self Governing Authority proposals of the LTTE on the topic "Who is the real enemy of peace?" It launched its campaign on August 11. Addressing a meeting Wednesday at Maharagama Youth Centre, Mr.Wimal Weerawanse JVP parliamentary group leader and propaganda secretary said that the powers of the proposed ISGA would be more powerful than the executive presidency of the country. He warned that if the UPFA government went ahead with the ISGA proposals as basis for future peace talks with the LTTE there would no other alternative for the JVP but to muster support of the people to sacrifice their lives for the motherland. He said the ISGA if granted would create a separate state in the country. "We will not support future peace talks based on the ISGA proposal of the LTTE to get foreign aid," said Mr.Weerawanse.

LTTE antenna Colombo: Aug 20 – Quoting Police intelligence sources, a news report from Colombo said that a high powered satellite antenna has been fixed in Colombo allegedly by the LTTE to intercept security forces' communications. The report claims that this powerful antenna is installed and operated from the premises of a Tamil businessman is located within 100-200 meters of the harbour. A special police unit has been appointed to investigate and take into custody the antenna which is said to be capable of intercepting communication between the Colombo Harbour and security establishments.

Two Tigers killed in ambush: Aug 20 - Mr. Bawa, a senior member of the Liberation Tigers from the Amparai District and an LTTE rehabilitation affairs official were killed in an ambush near a Sri Lanka army camp at Kayankerni, 36 kilometres north of Batticaloa, Friday, 20 August, around 2.15 p.m. Mr. Bawa was riding a motorbike with Mr. Yoga, an LTTE official in charge of rehabilitation work, when gunmen ambushed them triggering a claymore mine and opening fire at Pullaavi junction in Kayankerni, an area within the control of the Sri Lankan military. A female cadre travelling with them was seriously injured. She was earlier believed dead. Mr. Bawa was formerly head of the LTTE political division for the Amparai District. The female cadre is admitted to the Intensive Care Unit of the Batticaloa General Hospital with serious injuries.

It is to be noted that Bawa was with the dissident LTTE commander Karuna when the latter revolted against Prabhakaran in March this year. With the collapse of the 41 day revolt, Bawa returned to the Prabhakaran group.Though he was removed from the post of Political Head of Amparai district, he was accepted back and given important assignments, said a knowledgeable local source.

President's portrait smashed: Aug 20 -A large group of undergraduates on Friday, 20 August, forcibly removed a portrait of Sri Lanka's President Chandrika Kumaratunga from the general hall of the Jaffna University and smashed it in protest against the her government's policiy on the Tamil question, staff said. Students of the university had earlier petitioned the Vice Chancellor urging him to remover her photo from the general hall. The undergraduates carried away the portrait to the university ground shouting slogans against her and smashed it there, according to members of the staff.

Grenade attack on soldiers: Aug 21 - A Sri Lanka army soldier was injured in a grenade attack in Mankerni, about 47 kilometres north of Batticaloa on 21 August, Police in the eastern town said. The soldier was riding a motorbike with another trooper when unidentified assailants lobbed a grenade at them. The second soldier was unhurt, Police said. Residents of the area, however, said that an army captain was also injured in the attack. He was identifief as Captain Wijeratna of Sri Lanka army's 55-2 Brigade in Valaichenai. The trooper is private Tennekoon. They were taken to hospital in Polannaruwa, 95 kilometres northwest of Batticaloa. Mankerni residents said the assailants had opened fire on the soldiers after they had lobbed the grenade. Mankerni is near Kayankerni where two LTTE cadres were shot dead by unidentified gunmen Friday.

The Sri Lankan military has accused the Tamil Tiger of carrying out the attack on government troops. ❑

CLASSIFIED ADS

First 20 words £10. each additional word 60p charge for Box No.£3..Prepayment essential.

The Advertisement Manager,
Tamil Times Ltd., PO Box 121,
Sutton, Surrey SM1 3TD, United Kingdom
Phone: 020 - 8644 0972
Fax: 020 - 8241 4557
E-Mail: admin@tamiltimes.org

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

MATRIMONIAL

Jaffna Hindu parents seek for their son, Doctor, MB. BS., MRCS, 32, UK born, bride to be of similar profession.
Tel: 0208 689 4979 (UK)

Sister *seeks bride for her kind hearted brother, 43, with minor disability. Divorcees or widows with no encumbrances may apply. Please send full details to*
M 1409 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek professional groom for fair, pretty daughter, 28, 5'4½", Manager of IT firm in city. Please send horoscope, details to*
M 1410 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents in UK *seek a professional groom for their daughter, 32, with post graduate qualifications and employed in London. Please apply with horoscope to*
M 1411 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek Doctor/Dentist/professional for their son, 32, 5'8", Post graduate qualified IT consultant working in the London City Bank and with substantial property assets in UK. Overseas interest would be welcome if prepared to relocate to UK. Please telephone with details 01737 218020 (UK)*

FOR SALE

A two bedroomed house on eight perches land at Vivekananda Road, Wellawatte. Two spacious bedrooms with attached bath, two toilets, lounge, dining room, kitchen, store and garage. Rear entrance leads to common pathway,
with separate entrance to the front.
Price Rs.125 lakhs; Payment in sterling.
Please contact
Advertiser, P.O.Box 1671,
Palmerston North, New Zealand.
Tel: (06)3564834 (between 8 to 10 AM GMT).

Two cooks

of Indian or Sri Lankan dishes required in Wembley area, UK.
For further details, please contact
Tel: 020 8904 1319 (UK) or
Mob: 07947 127 778

ABOUT PEOPLE AND EVENTS

IN MEMORIAMS

First Anniversary
8th August 2004
Mrs Poo Sivasubramaniam
(1929 – 2003)

Remembered with love and affection by family and friends.
Siva.niranjan@steria.co.uk
+44 1442 259122

Fourth Year Remenbrance

In loving memory of ***Mrs Amirtharanee Ratnasingham*** *on the fourth anniversary of her passing away on the 21st August 2000.*

Affectionately remembered by her loving Son Kumaran, Sister Thevaranee and other members of the family.

– Miss J. T. Rasiah,
64 Jessup Close,
London SE18.

Fifteenth Death Anniversary

In treasured memory of ***Emma Rosalind Jesudason –nee Gunasegaram.*** *Remembered on her 15th death anniversary on ninth August 2004.*

'A life of faith and dedication'

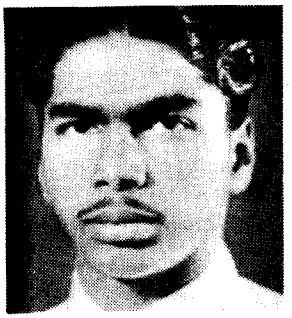
Sadly missed by her children, grandchildren and great grandson in Sri Lanka, Canada, United States and United Kingdom.

– 13, Clematis Road, Willowdale, Ontario M2J 4X1, Canada.

Third Year Remembrance
Dr. Chelvadurai Manogaran (1935 –2001)
Emeritus Professor
of Geography University of
Wisconsin Parkside, (USA)

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his beloved wife Santhana Devi (Kili); daughters Anita and Shakila; son-in-law Douglas Shimp; grandson Nathaniel Shimp, family and friends.

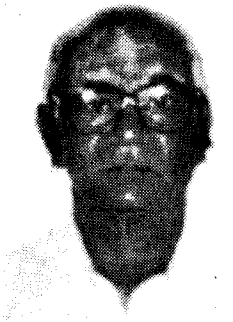
Death Anniversary Remembrance
Mr. Apputhurai Gunaratnam



In loving memory of ***Mr. Apputhurai Gunaratnam,*** *formerly Divisional Superintendent of Post Offices, Sri Lanka of Point Pedro on the fourteenth anniversary of his passing away on 28th August 1990*

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his loving wife Rani; children Thirukumar (Australia), Vasuki (Sri Lanka), Devaki (Australia), Sutharsan (UK), Sarathadevi (Australia); sons-in-law Ravindran, Radhakrishnan and Sashikanth; daughter-in-law Vasanthi; grandchildren Ashvini, Yathurshini, Prushoth, Mayurikka and Mayuran. –1 Appin Court, Roxborough Park, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middx HA2 0KQ.

Second Anniversary Remembrance



In ever loving memory of ***Mr. Sinnathamby Sivapiragasam*** *of Sandilipay, formerly of Irrigation Department, Colombo on the second anniversary of his passing away on 23rd August 2002 (30th August according to the Hindu calendar)*

Fondly remembered and sadly missed by his children Radha, Sivakumarran, Rajini, Ramani, Rohini and Renuka; daughter-in-law Navamani; sons-in-law Viswanathan, Dr. Salama, Sivagurunathan and Umasuthan; grandchildren Sivaruby & Sivayogi, Krishnakumar & Ahilan, Shireen, Vidya & Menaha, Jenani & Richard; great grand daughter Yalini and sister Kanmani - 10 Orchard Court, The Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7LD. Tel: 020 330 6722.

Arumugam Mahendran
(Retired Deputy Inspector General of Police)
Born: September 14th 1921 Died: August 27th 1979

I never saw you, never met you, never knew you,
This privilege was taken away from me,
and many of my cousins too,
Pictures are all we have to remember your strong soul,
For in our hearts you left an unfillable hole,
A gentleman known to be strong on the outside, yet loving inside,
Up in heaven, we know your there to watch over us, and guide,
Usually seen in your shiny polished shoes and police uniform,
Owning a soul so caring, and a heart so warm,
For 25 years your body has been at peace,
For your spirit is still with us, it shall never cease,
We may have never seen you, never met you, never known you,
But we always did, and always will, forever, love you

Written by: Divya Mahendran

Ever missed by your Sorrowing wife, children, In-laws and grandchildren.

First Year Remembrance

In loving memory of ***Mr. Chellappah Balasingam*** *on the first anniversary of his passing away on 10th August 2003.*

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his beloved wife Balasaraswathy; children Ragulan, Renuka (both of UK), Ravichandran (Chennai, India), Ragavan and Rathika (both of UK); sons-in-law Shriananda and Rajaloganathan; daughters-in-law Sujatha and Shanthi; grandchildren Hariharan, Rishiharan, Sindhuja, Bhairavi, Sriram, Piranavan and Lakshman –3A The Drive, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 1HQ. Tel: 01923 842 275.

NATHAN & CHELVA

SOLICITORS

We Work For Your Interest

Contact us for prompt & proper service in all Legal matters including Immigratiom & Conveyancing
Domestic & Commercial
Legal Aid Work also undertaken

Partners: K. Chelva-Nayagam LLB., T. Sri Pathma Nathan

169 TOOTING HIGH STREET, LONDON SW17 0SY

TEL: 0181-672 1800

FAX: 020-8672 0105

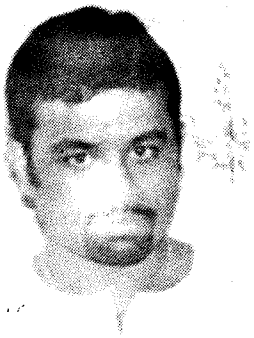
DIY General Insurance

www.armassociates.co.uk - useful links - ARM Online Insurance

Death Anniversary Remembrance
Mr. Mayilvaganam Velummylum

Mr. Mayilvaganam Velummylum *J.P., U.M., Attorney-at-law and former Chairman, Urban Council, Point Pedro, Sri Lanka passed away suddenly on 31.8.89 and the fifteenth anniversary falls on 31.8.2004. Sadly missed and lovingly remembered by his loving wife; children Thayanandarajah (UK), Nithianandarajah (New Zealand), Mayilvaganarajah (UK), Chitra (Colombo), Anandarajah, Krishnarajah and Jayanthi (all of Madras); grandsons Cameron, Ewan and Atharsan; son-in-law Kamaleswaran (Colombo); daughters-in-law Sumitra (UK), Devi (New Zealand), relatives, friends and a host of grateful constituents. – "Hillcroft", 14 Howards Wood Drive, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 7HN.*

Eighth Death Anniversary



22nd August 2004
In Ever Loving Menory of
Selvarajah Kiritharan

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his loving parents Mr.& Mrs.Kamalakumari Selvarajah (North Harrow, UK); brother Muraleedaran (Australia); sisters Dr. Subathini Ramesh (Jaffna University), Mrs Shanthini Shanmuganathan (UK), uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends.

Your Memories are always with us

63 Elm Croft Crescent, North Harrow, Middlesex HA2 6HL. Tel: 0208 863 6768/0208 422 4627

FORTHCOMINGS EVENTS

Sept *2 Sankadakara Sathurthi*
3. *Feast of St. Grerory*
4. *Karthigai*
5. *Aavani Sunday 3*
6. *Shri Krishna Jayanthi*
8. *Feast of the Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary*
10. *Krishna Eekathasi*
11. *Pirathosam*
12. *Aavani last Sunday*
14. *Amavasai; Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross*
15. *Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows*
16. *Feast of St. Cornellius*
17. *Vinayaga Sathurthi*
18. *Puraddasi Sani 1*
19. *Shashti; Feast of St. Januarius*
20. *Feast of St. Mathew*
24. *Sukkla Eekathasi*
25. *Puraddasi Sani 2*
26. *Pirathosam*
27. *Feast of St. Vincent de Paul*
28. *Full Moon*
30. *Feast of St. Jerome*

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couple on their recent wedding.

Chrishanthini, *daughter of Mr. & Mrs B Sri Ratnam of 87 Davidson Road, Colombo 4 and* ***Krishna,*** *son of Mrs. V.Ramanathan and late Mr. S.Ramanathan of 12 Palm Grove, Colombo 3 on 21st August 2004 at Kathiresan Hall, 339 Galle Road, Colombo 4.*

Guru Paran, *son of Mr. & Mrs. Gunaratnam of 1414 Lake Fraser Court S.E., Calgary, AlbertaT2J 7G4, Canada and* ***Sathya,*** *daughter of Mr. & Mrs Karunananthan on 27th August 2004 at Murugan Temple Sivananda Ashram, 5560, rue du Belle Automne, Val Morin, Quebec, Canada.*

Nimalan, *son of Mr.& Mrs. Kanagasundaram of 1 Haling Park Gardens, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 6NP and* ***Monika,*** *daughter of Mrs Nazika Medic of 39 Gloucester Road, Walthamstow, London E17 6AE on 28th August 2004 at Archbishop Lanfranc School Hall, Mitcham Road, Croydon CR9 3AS.*

Puvanaraj, *son of Mrs T. Kunarasah and late Mr. R. Kunarasah of 349, Pleasant Street, Building B1, Apt 11, Malden 02148, USA and* ***Priya,*** *daughter of Mr. & Mrs Selvarasah, 10-301 Washburn Way, Scarborough, Ontario M1B 1K4, Canada on 28th August 2004 at Mega Banquet Hall, 3330 Pharmacy Avenue, Toronto, Canada.*

Mr Ponnumpalam Thevarajah

- An Appreciation

The passing away of Mr Thevarajah on 26 July 2004 peacefully after a brief illness, brought with it much sorrow to his wife, family and friends. Though he was 82 years of age at his passing away, he never gave an impression that his age would be a barrier to his outgoing personality. His funeral took place on 29 July at Hendon Cemetery, at which there was a large gathering of relations and friends, which showed the volume of the regard and respect that, the people had for him. He was born on 29 June 1922 at Kokuvil and married Indrani and had three sons and a daughter, who are all married, except his youngest son and all are settled well in life.

He joined the then Ceylon Government Railway in 1944 as an Assistant Station Master and retired as a Station Master Class 1 from Katunayake Station, having served in most of the important stations in the Railway. By his devoted service in the Railway, he won the hearts of everyone who came in close contact with him. He was unassuming conscientious and a capable person. His warm and holy manner put his friends and foes at ease. Though a strict disciplinarian, he was kind to his staff - dealing with any offender firmly, without reporting anyone of them to higher authorities, and thus earned the respect of everyone.

I came to know him intimately in 1960 when both of us served in the Railway, and I can say with conviction, that he was an indefatigable worker who bore an unblemished character, a self-effacing personality and a Gentleman. He was endowed with abundance of human qualities. Those of us who associated with Theva will always remember him as a true friend and a gem of a Gent.

He was a Trustee of Kirupakara Murugan Temple in his village Kokuvil, and his last wish had been to worship at this Temple which was rewarded when he visited Sri Lanka/Jaffna in June 2004

SRI LANKA INFORMATION SITE
WWW.srilankans.co.uk

with his wife Indrani, during his short stay in Sri Lanka. He also hosted a function at a hotel in Colombo for his relations and friends. Most probably he must have had a premonition of his impending death. To fulfil his last wish, he had a supportive and understanding wife, who had been a source of strength to him during his last days in this wonderful world.

He had donated his house and property at Kokuvil, to his 'Alma Mater', Kokuvil Hindu College which is now being used as the College Library and playground. For the yeoman services he had rendered to the Kokuvil Hindu College, he was made Patron of the OBA - UK

His wife, children, in-laws and grandchildren who received his unstinting love and affection will sadly miss him and my deepest sympathies go out to them at this time of their grief.

Dear Theva your life was one well spent and the Almighty will say "Well Done my faithful servant".

"His life was gentle and the elements so mixed in him, that nature might stand up and say to all the World: This was a Man"

- William Shakespeare

May He attain Eternal Bliss.

M.Balasundram
Retired Station Master
- C.G.R.

SKANDA VARODAYA COLLEGE

Old Students Association (U.K. Branch)

A.G.M., Reunion Lunch & Variety Entertainment

at KELSEY PARK SCHOOL HALL

Manor Way, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3SJ

On Sunday, 26th September 2004 at 12.30 p.m.

Tickets: Adults £ 10, Children under 16 £ 5, under 12 Free

For tickets and information, please telephone

020 8651 6129/ 8977 6277, 8768 3468 & 8644 0972

We look forward to the presence of
all past students, their families, friends,
and all well wishers of the college

Dr. J. Kumaran (Hony. Secretary)

Seeniappa Padmanathan
– A Cultural Stalwart

The death of Mr Seeniappah Padmanathan of Durban, South Africa occurred on June 27th, 2004 at the age of 73. He died after suffering a heart attack. The funeral was held on 28th June . He leaves behind his beloved wife Sri Thevi and his sons Suntharesan, Kumaresan, Sarvesan and Jegathesan.

His passing away is a tragedy to countless South Africans who have a deep interest in Indian Culture. Over the years "Paddy" as he was fondly known played a significant role as an excellent administrator and a dedicated exponent in the promotion of Carnatic music in SA. Very, very sadly my wife and I were away in Chennai, India on pilgrimage to do certain prayers in memory of our son, whom we lost in November 2003. When we arrived at the Johannesburg International Airport my daughter broke the news to me. and I was shocked and numbed with sorrow at the passing away of Paddy who was truly a gentleman, a friend and a stalwart for Indian music.

I recall my first meeting with Paddy and Sri Thevi when they visited us at home many years ago. He was the financial manager of one of the biggest Companies in Transkei. He founded the Rotary Club of Butterworth, Transkei and later became its president. They lived in Butterworth. Paddy would sometimes accompany Srithevi whenever there was a major cultural event organised by the Indian Academy of SA. He would do everything to help Sri Thevi in her musical career. Transkei offered no opportunities for Thevi's talents.

In 1990 through the kind efforts of Mr.Sushipal Rambharos, Paddy became the financial manager of the Aryan Benevolent Homes in Chatsworth. He was always the inspiration to his wife Thevi. Paddy then went on together with Sri Thevi to form the International Centre for Performing Arts. Earlier on he had helped found the Salem Jayalakshmi Centre for the Arts. He was involved in other community efforts, but one of his monumental efforts was the setting up of a merger that led to the formation of the Durban Childrens' Society, which he serviced as trustee (Hon) with great distinction up to the time of his passing.

Paddy worked selflessly in the promotion of Carnatic music in SA. He was a man without any motive looking neither for reward nor honour for his outstanding contribution to Indian culture. Despite his tremendous modesty the Indian Academy bestowed upon him and his gracious wife, Sri Thevi the Swami Thyagaraja Music Award for the outstanding contribution to Carnatic music in SA.

It was a moment of great poignancy when this humble servant of the people walked onto stage to receive the award. He was very emotional and filled with excitement and gratitude. Looking back I think it was one of the finest moments on the cultural calendar of all South Africans. For many of us who were there it was an honour to witness this highlight in Paddy's wonderful life of selfless service.

This third annual Carnatic music festival commencing on 9th July is a tribute to Paddy's determination to promote Carnatic music in SA. It is tribute to a great visionary. Paddy was a remarkable man. He was filled with determination. He was a brilliant administrator and organiser. Despite his popular public image Paddy was a humble man with a warm sense of friendship and sincerity, which inspired and drove those around him to accomplish many cultural milestones in SA.

Despite his long illness and continuous cardiac problems that plagued him, he never once shirked his duty. Most people in his condition would have thrown the towel in, but Paddy continued to plod on in the musical world putting the cause of Indian culture ahead of his own health. Like a heroic soldier he died serving. The greatest tribute we can pay to Paddy is that the candles of hope that he lit for Carnatic music in SA will continue to burn brightly for now and forever, so long as there is good Indian music in this land PADDY WILL BE REMEMBERED!

T. P. Naidoo
Director, Indian Academy of South Africa.

"ESSENTIALS OF SAIVISM" BY R. GOPALAKRISHNAN

Saivism, also known as Saivaism, is the oldest known faith, followed by 800 million people in the world today. It is increasingly practised on its own, rather than as a part of Hinduism. I had read 'An Introduction to Saivaism' written by the late Krishnapillai Gnanasoorian (Swami Siva Nandhi), two decades ago. I have also read with great interest Elaiyathamby Subramaniam's, The Philosophy and Practice of Saivaism, an excellent book of 129 pages, published in 1994 by Brittania Hindu (Shiva) Temple Trust. Mr. Subramaniam wrote it as a mature, 87 years old devotee. In 2002, I had the opportunity to read 'Insight & Research into Saivaism' of the Federation of Saiva (Hindu) Temples, UK. It was a 277-page illustrated A4-sized collection of research papers and lay-type articles by about 50 Indian and Lankan Tamil Saiva practitioners.

And lately I was given a manuscript by Mr. N. Satchithananthan, of Professor R. Gopalakrishnan's Essentials of Saivism, with request for a Foreword. Gopalakrishnan's book was also sponsored by the same Federation, founded in 1998 by Mr. Satchithananthan and the late Mr. A.T.S. Ratnasingham (Federation's first Chairman and sponsor of the 1998 Conference). This book, published in time for the 6th Saiva Conference of the Federation in London in 2003, is an A5 and 120-odd pages endeavour. Unmet demands have now triggered its 2004-reprint, for the Federation's 7th Conference.

The first thing I noticed about this book was its simplicity. The Author uses simple, lucid, universal style of English, with only essential religious jargon, in order to present the elements and substance of Saivism to children as well as to adults without significant knowledge of Saivism. The book is reader-friendly and easy to understand. Its layout and fonts are appealing. It is handy and beautiful.

Although written by a research scholar who is a practising professor (and Head of Department of Philosophy, University of Madras), the usual academic trademarks, like footnotes which need turning of pages back and forth for cross reference, have been studiously avoided. There is also no lengthy bibliography of the Author's references. Yet wherever needed, some sources have been mentioned in the textual pages themselves, and thus, the keener readers are not left in the lurch.

Thirdly, excerpts from original Tamil works, of the leading students, devotees and practitioners of Saivism over the ages have been judiciously reproduced within the chapters, in Tamil itself for the benefit of those who know Tamil as well. But brilliant English translations of the Tamil excerpts have also been presented at the appropriate locations, so that non-Tamil readers do not lose speed, understanding or interest.

Fourthly, the subject matter is presented in a logical sequence and balanced manner, starting with a brief contextual history, and sub-divided into the related major aspects, extraordinary care having been taken to correctly spell out in English, the Tamil names of persons, places, literary works, doctrines, and so on, to help readers to be able to speak them out comprehensibly, in discussions with others on related aspects.

It is also to the Author's credit that the complex, theologically deep and often confusing subject of Saivism has been broken down into convenient chapters and sub-headings, and presented in orderly, painstaking fashion and style, suited to the modern 21st century audience, with simplified lists, tables and systemic line diagrams. The influence of other religions and of the Sanskrit language on the development of Saivism are also dealt with. The Appendices and Glossaries at the end of the book should be of assistance to those wishing to gain a deeper understanding of the subject.

Most of the usual topics on the subject of Saivism - such as the ancient Vedas, Agamaas, Puranas, Ithihasas and Upanishads, Sangam Literature, The 12 Thirumurais, The 14 Philosophical Works, modern Devotional Literature, Doctrines, Modes of Worship, Saivism as the nucleus of Hinduism and hence being Hinduism itself, Siva as the one and only God, His various Forms and Names, His Nature and Attributes; Proper Notion of the Linga, its Significance, Attributes and Divisions; the Concept of Soul, Bondage, Types of Impurities, Temple Worship, The Path of Wisdom, Roles of Holy Ashes and the Bead Chain, Aspect of the Soul Enjoining Siva, and Rebirth are all dealt with in adequate detail. This is an excellently written book of modest size, which justifies its title and objective. I recommend the book as an essential addition to the library of persons interested in Saivism and Hinduism, and to those intellectually keen on understanding religions in general.

In conclusion, this book is suitable to be introduced in schools in the UK and other English-speaking countries like USA, Canada and Australia as a recommended text for the teaching of comparative religion. It is modestly priced at £3.00, and is available from most of the London's Saiva Temples.

- Professor Kopan Mahadeva

Balan Annai – A Compassionate Being

First Anniversary Remembrance

Mr. Balachandran Thurairatnam

Every child needs a role model especially outside his inner family; more so an adolescent. He or she has to be a slightly older sibling-like friend, an unpretentious and genuine counsellor and one who would not be afraid to talk or deal frankly on issues but with empathy and understanding. Such a person is an exemplar of great merit and is looked up and respected for his or her abilities, compassionate nature, lofty ideals, high moral values and exceptional leadership qualities.

Balan Thurairatnam, son of Mr and Mrs I P Thurairatnam of Tellipallai, came into my life via my dear cousin Vimala when I was virtually tempted to seek the path of a rebellious teenager angry with just about everything around me. Not that he cast his net and pulled me out of the morass and muddle I was plunging into but inspired me as one who could be trusted as a friend and worthy of being emulated. Already a person dear to my mother, grandma and brother Christie, Balan annai became my hero at the nick of time. The most attractive features of his nature were his intellectuality, humility, humour, sense of justice and fairness and above all, the sincere consideration with which he reached out to others. He was a man for all people.

Though a person who placed a high premium on our traditional values, he was a progressive in every way who could appreciate and accept the cultures of others with the greatest of ease and respect. This made him a natural citizen of the world. Wherever he went he was comfortable. He was as much a Sri Lankan as he was a Zambian and to the people of Zambia, he gave his best labour. There are monuments like the Grand Stadium in Chipata that testify to his total dedication and commitment to Zambia.

As an individual, Balan Thurairatnam was a tough customer who demanded the best in others by example for he worked with great intensity and utter determination on whatever he undertook; he aimed at perfection at all times. No matter what he did, he did with a smile on his face and pride in his craftsmanship. Whether it was drawing up a plan, writing something or making simple or complex craft items, he gave intense attention even to the tiniest of details.

This nature was his hallmark whether he expounded a topic from the rostrum of a conference, discussed an issue at a committee session or freely shared his views on a wide variety of subjects among gatherings of relatives and friends.

Above all, he nourished and showered all those dear to him with an ever-flowing love and affection. Although he and Vimala lived in Zambia for the last several years, those close to them in various parts of the world felt their presence and nearness at all times. They were in constant contact with their dear ones taking great pride in keeping all relationships fresh and fragrant; the feelings and vibrations thus created bound us all together. It is only a unique person like Balan annai who could have bestowed a beautiful bouquet of admiration and esteem on his mother and equally Vimala's mother with an endearing testimony to motherhood titled "My Two Mothers" and published as a book.

Balan annai impressed on me from my teenage years that happiness is a state of mind and that real source of happiness lies within our minds and not drawn from external conditions. Regardless of the circumstances we find ourselves, if our mind is pure, peaceful and appreciative of whatever that is positive around us, we will not only be happy but also be compassionate beings who help create halos of impacts on those around us. In him, I saw a strong spirit of humanity that certainly had a divine aura.

As we mark the first anniversary of his departure from mortality and celebrate a life well lived, let me share these sweet sentiments of profound gratification with all those to whom he was a very unique friend and relative and especially to Vimala, her sons Prashanth, Devashanth and Premshanth and their families to whom I say in particular: "Thank you for sharing Balan annai with me". He will dwell ceaselessly in my heart stimulating me with his compassionate nature.

- Victor Karunairajan

Preetha's Musical Interlude

The Beck Theatre at Hayes, London was the venue of an enthralling feast of Carnatic vocal music on Sunday, 1st August, 2004. The artist was the young sixteen year old Preetha Raghu, a disciple of Mrs. Sivasakthi Sivanesan , Head of Carnatic Music at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, London. The performance was billed as "Samarpanam" - a musical tribute; and in the event, turned out to be a memorable experience. It was only in the fitness of things, that Sangeetha Kalanidhi and Padma Vibhushan Dr. M Balamuralikrishna, arguably the foremost living exponent of Carnatic Vocal Music, was present at the function as Chief Guest to confer his benedictions on the young artist.

Preetha commenced proceedings with the traditional "Varnam" in Raga Kanada and by the time the next song in praise of god Vinayaka in Raga Hamsadhwani was taken up, the tempo had enlivened and the concert was moving into top gear. The beauty of Raga Hamsadhwani was in full evidence in the elaboration by Preetha and the subsequent dialogue in swaras with the accompanists was indeed a treat. This was followed by one of Saint Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Krithis in Raga Nattai. Singing of Pancharatna Krithis denotes a milestone and a tribute to the savant of Carnatic Music. Preetha's delightful exposition of the song was ample proof of her effortless ease with the idioms and grammar of classical music. Then came the Gopalakrishna Bharatiyar song in praise of the Lord of Chidamabaram, and the lyrical grandeur of the Tamil Poetry was fully captured in the pleasing rendering by the artist.

The centrepiece of the evening's concert was the composition of Muthuswamy Dik-shitar in Raga Kalyani devoted to Goddess Kamalambha. Only accomplished artists of long experience and expertise venture to take up this composition. Preetha, though young in years, showed her depth of knowledge and mastery over the intricate steps involved while rendering the song. Starting with an elaborate portrayal of Raga Kalyani, the artist essayed the Niraval with aplomb and went on to engage in a spirited swaraprastharas with all the accompanying artists fully in tandem. It was really a scintillating demonstration of the essence of Carnatic Music at it's best.

Preetha showed her musical versatility in a series of short pieces in the final session. A soulful rendering of Gopalakrishna Bharati's "Eppo Varuvaaro" in Raga Jhonpuri was followed by another Tamil song in Sindhu Bhairavi. Both these songs were well chosen to bring out Preetha's facility with tuneful rhythm. The devotional song in praise of Saint Raghavendra in Raga Yaman Kalyan evoked the spiritual content of the composition. And the subsequent Hindustani Bhajan of Saint Tulsidas enhanced the reposeful atmosphere. Preetha seems to be fully conversant with a wide range of musical discourse, be it heavy classical, light classical, devotional etc. At the end, a full throated Thillana in Raga Behag, composed and set to music by Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna, was sung with great vivacity and enthusiasm with the coordinated participation of the instrumental ensemble. It was a fitting finale to a very pleasant evening of music. Preetha was accompanied on the Violin by Balu Raghuraman, on the Mridangam by Bala-chander, on the Ghatam by Bangalore RN Prakash and on the Morsing by Pirash-anna Thevaraja. Balu Raghuraman and Balachander are leading artists in their own right and are presently resident teachers at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in London.

In his brief speech, Dr. Balamuralikrishna observed that he had predicted a bright future for Preetha even while witnessing her arangetram in Chennai last year. He said that Preetha has a great future, tremendous potential and talent. Endowed with a sweet voice, good stage presence, and a natural aptitude for music, Preetha is sure to go a long way with her musical pursuits.

Preetha Raghu is the daughter of Mr Raghu Krishnamoorthy and Mrs. Bala Raghu. She is an honour student of grade 11 at the American School in London.

- Dr. S.Narapalasingham

Western Jewellers
Jewellers & Gem Merchants
230 Upper Tooting Road
London SW17 7EW
Opening Hours
Monday to Saturday
10.00am -6.30pm
Telephone:
020 8767 3445
Sunday
11.00am-5.30pm
Silk Emporium
SILK
EMPORIUM
122 Upper Tooting Road
London SW17 7EN
Tel : 020 8672 1900
Season's Best Is "Summer"
Saree's Best Is "Silk Emporium Sarees"
WESTERN
Jewellers & Textiles
5 Plaza Parade, 29 – 33 Ealing Road,
Wembley, Middlesex HA0 4YA
Tel : 020 8903 0909

airfare direct

Tel 020 8340 2121

holidays2srilanka.com

COLOMBO Return

£450 + Taxes (Valid from 10 Sept - 30 Nov 04)
£390 + Taxes (via Abu Dhabi from 16 Aug - 19 Nov 04)
£365 + Taxes (via Amman from 17 Aug - 10 Dec 04)
£478 + Taxes (via Dubai from 20 Aug - 09 Dec 04)
£350 + Taxes (Valid till 01 Sep - 30 Nov 04)

Special Offer

~ COLOMBO RETURN ~
Qatar Airways

£360 + Taxes (via Doha from 10 Sep - 04 Dec 04)

ABTA 6009 PROTECTED

IATA

COLOMBO

£480 + Taxes (Valid from 20 Aug - 9 Dec 04) including free trip to following destinations: Madras / Trichi /Trivandrum / Bombay / Cochin / Karachi / Bangkok / Singapore / Jakarta / Hongkong

218 Archway Road, Highgate, London N6 5AX
Fax - 020 8340 8826 Email - info@holidays2srilanka.com

Travel **RIGHT**

The **RIGHT** *people to do business with*

82 MITCHAM ROAD TOOTING SW17 9NG

MAIN AGENT FOR SriLankan Airlines, Qatar Airways, Royal Jordanian, Air India, Egyptair, Garuda Indonesia

Preferred Main Agent for Colombo, Madras & Far East

QATAR AIRWAYS CMB - £360 +Tax DXB - £215 +Tax BKK - £330 + Tax

SriLankan Airlines CMB - £585 +Tax

ETIHAD AIRWAYS CMB - £390 +Tax

GULF AIR
Dubai / Abu Dhabi / Muscat - £190 + tax
Bangkok / Singapore / £300 + tax

Royal Jordanian CMB - £445 +Tax

Kuwait Airways CMB - £400 +Tax

Free Extensions to:- Madras / Trichi / Trivandram / Cochin / Bombay / Calicut or Hyderabad

PROMOTIONAL BEST SUMMER FARE

Bangkok Kuala Lumpur Hong Kong £470+tax

WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS

020 8767 7775

FAX: 020 8767 5991, MOBILE 07850 876921
E-MAIL: info@skybooker.com

IATA

ATOL 75766

✪TRAVEL ✪ SHIPPING ✪ AIR FREIGHT ✪TRAVEL ✪ SHIPPING ✪ AIR FREIGHT✪

GLEN CARRIERS LTD

The most trusted in the business

18 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE SRI LANKAN COMMUNITY

MOST COMPETITIVE AIRFARES TO COLOMBO & OTHER WORLD WIDE DESTINATIONS

SHIPPING AND AIR FRIEGHT SERVICES TO COLOMBO AND OTHER WORLD WIDE DESTIANTIONS

NEXT SAILINGS

21 AUG / ETA COLOMBO – 10 SEPT

04 SEPT / ETC COLOMBO – 24 SEPT

THE MOST EASY CLEARANCE OF YOUR CARGO AT OUR MODERN BONDED WAREHOUSE

LAKSIRISEVA

66 NEW NUGE ROAD

PELIYAGODA

PLEASE RING US FOR OTHER SPECIAL FARES ON

020 8743 7353

HOLIDAY INN GALLE FACE

£22

PER PERSON SHARING DOUBLE ROOM B/B

SRILANKAN AIRLINES

10 Sept – 09 Dec From £450
10 Dec – 24 Dec From £665
25 Dec – 31 Dec From £540
01 Jan – 29 Mar From £450 (2005)

ETIHAD AIRWAYS

01 Sept – 30 Nov From £350
01 Dec – 09 Dec From £400
10 Dec – 24 Dec From £500

QATAR AIRWAYS

20 Aug – 09 Dec From £435

10 Dec – 24 Dec From £540

NEWS FLASH

London to Colombo return to Wednesday - night Flights

£360 + taxes

CONDITIONS APPLY

KUWAIT AIR

01 Sep – 30 Nov From £360
01 Dec – 09 Dec From £410
10 Dec – 31 Dec From £444

GULF AIR

16 Aug – 19 Nov From £390
20 Nov – 27 Nov From £445
28 Nov – 3 Dec From £505
4 Dec – 26 Dec From £585

EXTENSIONS TO Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Madras, Trichi, Trevandrum, Bombay or Delhi

ALL AVAILABLE ON SRI LANKAN AIRLINES

Main Agents for SriLankan Airlines, Qatar Airways, Cyprus Airways, Airlines, Royal Jordanian, Kuwait Airways, Saudo Arabian Airlines

APPOINTED AGENT OR LION AIR

ALL ABOVE FARES ARE EXCLUDING AIRPORT TAXES AND HANDLING CHARGES
CREDIT CARD ACCEPTED – SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

14 Allied Way, off Warple Way, Acton, London, W3 0RQ
Tel: 020 8740 8379, 020 8749 0595, 020 8743 7353, Fax: 020 8740 4229
Email: glencarriers@aol.com Website: http://www.glencarriers.co.uk

IATA

SKY WINGS LTD

TRAVEL AGENT

"Sky wings.....Where the Sun never sets"

QATAR AIRWAYS

CMB - £360 +Tax DXB - £215 +Tax BKK - £330 + Tax

SriLankan Airlines

CMB - £585 +Tax

Free Extensions to:- Madras / Trichi / Trivandram / Cochin / Bombay / Calicut or Hyderabad

ETIHAD AIRWAYS

CMB - £390 +Tax

GULF AIR

Dubai / Abu Dhabi / Muscat - £190 + tax

Bangkok / Singapore / £300 + tax

Royal Jordanian

CMB - £445 +Tax

Kuwait Airways

CMB - £400 +Tax

ADDED SERVICES:
1. RATMALANA / JAFFNA / RATMALANA AIR TICKET
2. INDIAN & AUSTRALIAN VISAS
3. TRAVEL INSURANCE

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

WE OFFER SUMMER HOLIDAY PACKAGES TO VARIOUS DESTINATIONS

SRILANKAN AIRLINES AWARD FOR PASSENGER SALES

MAIN AGENT FOR

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT OUR STAFF ON

020 8672 9111

119 HIGH STREET, TOOTING, LONDON SW17 0SY

mobile: 07850 876 921 (24 hours) Web: www.skywings.co.uk E-mail: bala@skywings.co.uk

IATA

ATOL 7576S